

THE NATALIE ZEMON DAVIS ANNUAL LECTURES

DIVINE PRESENCE

in Spain and Western Europe
1500–1960

William A. Christian Jr.



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DIVINE PRESENCE IN SPAIN AND WESTERN
EUROPE 1500–1960

The Natalie Zemon Davis Annual Lecture Series
at Central European University, Budapest

DIVINE PRESENCE IN SPAIN
AND WESTERN EUROPE
1500–1960

*Visions, Religious Images
and Photographs*

William A. Christian Jr.



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*To Edith Christian Minear,
Silvia Ravelo Arrom, Dave Cronon,
and all who, named and unnamed,
look out from the photographs
on these pages.*

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Preface

In addition to sensitivity, joy and commitment, Natalie Davis brought to early modern European religious history the serene pluralism of the new field of religious studies. This approach, following William James, did not work out from a given theology and did not take sides, but rather looked at religion sympathetically and objectively as human behavior. Davis early on applied this approach to the early modern period, through historical documents as well as sacred texts. And over the years she has periodically encouraged my attempt to work backwards in time from the study of religion in twentieth-century rural France and Spain, searching for the voices in documents and the documents in voices.

The continuities between the present and the past are especially striking in matters religious, where some institutions are over a thousand years old. Some practices, like the use of votive offerings or sacrific-

es, and some classes of holy sites, like springs, caves, prominent trees and mountain tops, even antedate the particular religions in which they are presently used. The latter continuities in pattern have variously served as an excuse to dismiss or relativize faith, posit a universal transcultural spirituality, or provide an “eternal” pedigree for new, ersatz rituals.¹ In some religions there are particular holy places, shrine images, relics, and sacred manuscripts that have been in use longer than any present-day nation-state has existed. Other practices, like rain processions and exorcisms, continue strikingly similarly for hundreds of years.

These chapters will address three strands of continuities, discontinuities, and resignifications having to do with the divine presence: a vision to a grandmother in her garden in 1931 introduces the long tradition of mysterious strangers bearing information and instruction of which it was a late example; the rise and decline of images seemingly exuding blood, sweat and tears in early modern Spain and the revival of the phenomenon in twentieth-century Europe; and a pictorial examination of how photographic postcards addressed the depiction of saints, the absent, and the dead alongside the living.

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these essays and the forum of discussion that has enriched them possible. Each essay had a trial run: the first in the Departamento de Historia Moderna of the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, kindly organized by María José del Río (who also read chapters and supplied sources and advice), the second at a Graduate Student Medieval Workshop at Harvard University that included a number of art historians, coordinated by Shirin A. Fozi and Marco Antonio Viniegra, and the third at a workshop on religious visions at the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford organized by Robert Scott and Linda Jack. I thank Marilina Maroto, Marisol Llamas García, and Diego Ramón Martínez in Casas de Benítez, el Rvdo. Miguel Ruíz Orozco, párroco de Vara del Rey, and Mercedes Gómez and Elena del Castillo in Burguillos de Toledo. Miguel Ángel Muñoz Torres and especially Pascual Martínez Martínez provided invaluable assistance with sources in and about Casas de Benítez, and Mónica Cornejo Valle and Vanesa Blanco Gallardo guided me to Burguillos. All chapters have been enriched by the ongoing study group, The Vision Thing, and individual chapters from readings by James Amelang, María José del Río, Lisa Godson, Jacqueline Jung, Amira Mittermaier, Vlad Naumescu, Felipe Pereda (who also provided one of the illustrations and supplied me with many sources), Katrina

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Chapter 1

Toribia del Val and the Mysterious Wayfarer of Casas de Benítez

For several years the medievalist Lisa Bitel and the photographer Matt Gainer attended the monthly visions of María Paula Acuña, a mother of six in her fifties, in the Mojave Desert of California. I went twice, taking students. Typically, hundreds of Latino-American pilgrims would be waiting when María Paula and her female acolytes arrived in a van. A procession on foot would pause when María Paula had her vision of Our Lady of the Rocks and people took pictures of the sky. Then later at the cult site the seer would report the Virgin's message and deliver a more general homily, take questions and bless the pilgrims individually. This had been going on for almost twenty years, with intermittent mentions in the press and on television. But when, in 2008, Bitel called the Diocese of Fresno, a spokesman dismissed the visions as "a non-event."¹ A great many such vision "non-events," episodes unregistered, unrecog-

nized, inconclusive and soon forgotten, do not enter history.

In the summer of 2009, a search in online historical newspapers turned up an account of a religious vision published in *República*, a Center-Left weekly in the conservative Spanish provincial capital of Cuenca. It is dated October 26, 1931, six months after Spain became a Republic and days after parliament voted for the separation of Church and State. For at least thirty years Spain had been deeply divided between believers and disbelievers more militant than ever. In those first months the press, some with wonder, others with scorn, had carried reports of apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Ezquioga in the Basque country and a number of other places.² In August, for instance, *República* had referred to “the mental retards who still believe in ‘apparitions’ and await a miracle . . . the flock that follows the scheming clergy . . . [as a result of] so many centuries of superstition and servitude.”³ Three months later, the editor was bemused to learn of an apparition earlier in the year in a far corner of his own province.⁴

In Cuenca Too?

Yes gentlemen, it's true. Cuenca too has had apparitions. In a small village of La Mancha, Casas de Benítez, when she was gathering broad beans, Toribia

“La Vaquera” [the Cowherder]—we are told by some gentlemen native to the village—looked up and met the humble, supplicating, and somewhat pitying gaze of a Señor with a full beard who asked for a handful of beans. The seer moved to pick more, but the apparition asked for some she had in her apron. She did as he asked, and complained about the prolonged drought. The apparition, with a certain compassion, raised his eyebrows, opened his eyes wide and told her: “This drought is lasting only because people want it to. Let them take San Isidro out in procession from Casas de Benítez and the Virgen de la Cabeza from Pozoamargo, join the two of them in the place known as La Poza, and Niagara Falls would be a mere watering can compared to what will come down.”

After saying this, and before “The Cowherder” could recover from her astonishment, he disappeared.

The good woman was evidently able to convince the authorities of both villages, in spite of the fact that they were Republicans—this was after April 14—because sure enough, out came both of the saints in procession, accompanied by about five thousand persons from neighboring towns, all with their umbrellas in search of a miracle. But, oh, the irony of fate, the sky which that day started out cloudy, leading the most devout people to expect the pseudo-miracle, cleared up as soon as the time came, so people had to use

their umbrellas to ward off the sun-god, who smiled in satisfaction at his prank.

Casas de Benítez, an agricultural town of 1,500 inhabitants at that time, was located at the southern limit of the province. News from the town was rare in the press of Cuenca. It was only in the context of the new Republic, only after apparitions in general had become fodder for ridicule, only after a delay of five months, and only, one should add, because it did not rain, that *República* published this note. It is a fluke that the story made it into print in 1931 and is available today.⁵

Was there really a Toribia who said she had had a vision, and did the processions really take place? Yes, there was, and yes, they did. A friend in Madrid had a cousin in Casas de Benítez; he called her, and she in turn quickly located Toribia's granddaughter, Marisol Llamas, now in her sixties. The story that Marisol told me over the phone was what her mother and older sister had told her:⁶

Grandmother Toribia went to Mass frequently, though she wasn't overly pious. She believed in God a lot. She did not know how to read and write (nor did my father and mother). What appeared to her was something like Christ,⁷ with a beard and long hair. There was a big drought, and the one with the

beard said that they should take out San Isidro and Santa María de la Cabeza, and it would rain. [When the two processions met] there was a gust of wind, a kind of whirlwind, and it did begin to rain. [As Marisol said this, a man in the background, a neighbor, commented, "But it hardly rained at all."]

Within the family, Marisol said, the consensus was that it was Christ who appeared, but that was left open. I asked whether the stranger asking for broad beans could have been Saint Isidro, who typically has a beard and long hair. But Marisol was quick and firm. "No, Saint Isidro has his hair pulled back, and the stranger's hair was loose, like Christ's."⁸

In February 2010, my friend Miguel, his cousin Marilina, and I visited Marisol and her husband, who had retired to Casas de Benítez after working in Madrid, Germany and Catalonia. Over cake and coffee she retold the story. Then we all drove out to the area halfway between Casas de Benítez and Pozoamargo where the processions met (*Fig. 1*).

Subsequently I talked by telephone to two elderly men who had been in the procession as children. They were firm that although everyone carried umbrellas, it had not rained when the images met. One said that on the day of the procession some hail had fallen elsewhere but had spared Casas de Benítez.⁹ The other



Fig. 1. Marisol Llamas, granddaughter of Toribia del Val, at the procession meeting zone, La Poza, Casas de Benítez (Cuenca), Feb. 8, 2010. Photo: the author. By permission, Marisol Llamas.

remembered that they sang hymns in the procession, that it drizzled a little when they were leaving town and that a man named Mingarro sold sparkling water from a cart.¹⁰ The town's unofficial historian is Pascual Martínez, a retired nuclear engineer who now lives in Madrid. It was he who pointed me to these men and made a call on my behalf to a woman in Casas de Benítez who would have been eight years old in May 1931; she remembered that a Mass had been said when the two images met, and that her father boosted her up on his shoulders so she could see the priest.¹¹ Martínez himself had mentioned the procession in one of his books, based on interviews in the 1970s, but no one had said anything to him about a vision. They had recalled the verses sung for rain, that it was a hot day in May, that the Pozoamargo priest delivered a sermon when the processions met, and that it did not rain.¹²

As to the vision itself, one of the men I talked to said he had a vague idea that Toribia was involved, and the other said, "Toribia said she had seen the Virgen de la Cabeza, and she was the one who organized the procession."¹³ The woman, who turned out to be the widow of one of Toribia's grandsons, was precise about the imprecision of the vision, quite in keeping with the newspaper report:¹⁴ "Toribia had a garden with tomatoes and broad beans very close to town on the road to San Clemente. There a man appeared to her, possibly God, Christ, or an angel. It was when she was gathering broad beans. Everybody talked about it."

Toribia del Val was sixty-three at the time of her vision.¹⁵ She, her husband and her children had been brought to the town as a young family to care for the cattle of the town's major landowner, an enterprising man who also operated water-powered electric generators in the region. Her husband was one of hundreds of employees or laborers of the landlord, and her family was far from the town's center of power.¹⁶

While there was some disagreement about the place where the processions had met, the consensus of people from Casas de Benítez and Pozoamargo is that it was indeed in the area known as La Poza.¹⁷ Everyone placed the events in late April or May, because only then were the broad beans in season, and that is when rain would have been needed for the other crops. Thus

the vision would have been close to May 15, Saint Isidro's feast day, when it was the custom to eat raw broad beans with slivers of salt cod at the bull fights.

The people of Casas de Benítez and the surrounding towns might have been primed, in a way, for the vision by a traumatic experience in May 1929, when in fifteen minutes an intense hailstorm, with a racket like an airplane motor, completely destroyed the town's crops. If during Toribia's procession hail fell elsewhere and spared Casas de Benítez, then the result was not all bad, though hardly what was promised.¹⁸

The event/non-event in 1931 was also close to the proclamation of the Republic on April 14 and the burning of churches in Madrid, Málaga and other cities by anticlerical rioters on May 11.¹⁹ So it would not be surprising if Toribia's vision or the two towns' response to it had a political side. A rain procession held in the town of Quero, 120 kilometers to the west, in the week before May 16, asked for Mary's intercession for rain but also her "mediation for the good of the Church and of Spain." And during supplications, there were miracle cures of a man bent double by arthritis and a woman in great pain from a broken ankle.²⁰ In early May, in various parts of New Castile, people were invading game preserves to plough up the land and hunt. In many towns competing Republican political parties were being formed, both by laborers

and schoolteachers, on the one hand, and landowners, on the other. In Casas de Benítez the new town council was elected on an expressly non-partisan slate, but in the following months there was violence nearby, and Socialists were making demands of the town council.²¹ In much of Spain, a mood of anxious epiphany among Catholics was the counterpoint to the mood of revolutionary hope among the poor and the intellectuals.²²

One remarkable aspect of recollections of those I spoke to was how matter-of-fact they were about Toribia's vision. While the procession was a memorable break in the routine worth reporting, Toribia's vision was not something anyone had bothered to mention. Although the people of the town surely had varying degrees of skepticism at the time, some people thought Toribia was a little special for her vision. Two remembered that she handed out, every Easter, small unleavened flat and round *tortas* to everyone leaving the church. This was her personal *caridad*, a custom dating from the Middle Ages that still survives in that zone on some feast days, generally the result of town-wide vows. She seems to have made her own vow to hand them out as a result of her vision. At least one family put away the Toribia's flat cake for use against the evil eye, particularly to protect their children.²³

What then makes this story, the mere skeleton of a tale, interesting?

One reason is that this is a missing story, and we all, historians or otherwise, have to deal with the basic issue of how much we are not being told. People did not mention Toribia's vision to Pascual Martínez, he thinks, simply because he did not know to ask about it and they did not consider it important. Were it not for that stray, long-forgotten newspaper report, Toribia and her visitor would not have entered the written record, as it was a non-event for everyone in Casas de Benítez I talked to.

By the same token, it may well be that many, probably most, extraordinary contacts with the supernatural go unreported and remain personal, or family- or community-bound. Were it not for an improbable combination of factors, and in particular the prominent news of apparitions of Ezquioga, this too would never have been published. It is therefore a precious example of the number of apparition and rain procession stories that do not get told, and those aspects of the untold stories that make them not newsworthy.²⁴

For one thing, Toribia had no proof of her vision. By definition, visions require special evidence to be believed. In medieval Spain, this evidence typically included some kind of bodily mark or anomaly: a hand stuck to the cheek, a mouth that could not be

forced open, or the presence of some token from the other world. From the sixteenth century on, when the Inquisition looked down on visions, the evidence was the images themselves that sweated or bled and were visible to all. In modern apparitions from La Salette on, the signs were variously: trance-like states in which seers were seemingly impervious to burns or pin-pricks; the seeming infusion of languages like Aramaic or Latin; or the demonstration of visions by celestial anomalies—the sun spinning, haloes around the sun, cloud-pictures like crosses in the sky. And in all periods the sign could be some vehicle for sudden, miraculous healing, like the discovery of a healing spring. In Toribia's case the sign would have been the downpour which did not happen, and her vision stands in particular for those we will never hear about because they lacked confirmation.

Just as this was a vision unconfirmed, so it was a rain procession with a new procedure which did not produce rain. Rain processions had their special prayers, local customary itineraries, protocols, and petitionary hymns. Toribia, or her visitor, were attempting an innovation in local procedures by having images and processions from two towns meet.

The choice of these images was important, for although people tended to confuse her with the Virgen de la Cabeza, a version of Mary, the patron saint of

Pozoamargo was Santa María de la Cabeza, San Isidro's wife. Isidro the Ploughman lived in the Madrid region in the thirteenth century, and his canonization in 1622 was a confirmation of Madrid's new power as Spain's court city. Thereafter the cult of Isidro and his wife spread across Spain, complementing or supplanting other saints who were agricultural specialists.²⁵ Somehow it must have made sense to join husband and wife, separate in neighboring towns, to open the floodgates of heaven.

The joining of male and female supernaturals had a long history in Spain, in New Castile, and even in Casas de Benítez, where the most dramatic moment of Holy Week was the encounter in the street of the image of Christ with the image of Mary. In most places the meeting takes place on Good Friday, when Christ carries a cross. In Casas de Benítez, it took place at three o'clock on Easter morning, with the Christ resurrected.

Often, but not always, Spain's supplicatory processions included a female figure, generally the Virgin Mary, and Christ or a male saint. The standard procedure in many places was to bring a powerful image of Mary or Saint Anne from a shrine, and place it on the main altar of the parish church "close to the tabernacle,"²⁶ as one account in 1578 made explicit, so that the image would intercede for the community



Fig. 2. Our Lady of the Rosary and Saint Joseph meet in river, Villamayor de Calatrava and Tirteafuera (Ciudad Real), May 1, 1984. Photo: Cristina García Rodero. By permission.

with God. In one city they habitually brought the Virgin from her rural shrine, and placed her before Saint Joseph, the co-patron of the city, thus joining husband and wife as at Casas de Benítez.²⁷ Similarly, two hundred kilometers southwest of Casas de Benítez, every year on May 8, Saint Joseph is still, even now, brought from one town to meet the Virgen del Rosario brought from another. The two processions meet knee-deep in a river on the border.²⁸ So the innovation Toribia requested was not outlandish (*Fig. 2*).

The idea of joining images from different towns is of course not exceptional either.²⁹ Throughout Spain, there are shrines with days on which villages bring their images, and at some, there are ceremonies in which the images ritually greet and take their leave of one another.³⁰ The convergence of processions from villages for rain likewise has a long tradition, particu-

larly in the zones where there is a chronic shortfall, where scores of towns meet at one shrine or another.³¹

While unsuccessful visions and rain processions were not normally news, the Republican newspaper of Cuenca had every interest in emphasizing the failure. For the previous thirty years, at least, rain processions had been a demonstration of divine power for Catholics, a butt of ridicule for freethinkers.³² In July, *República* had already printed on page one a satirical verse about the failure of insistent prayers for rain in another village in Cuenca. There what finally came was not rain, but hail that destroyed the crops, and some of the townspeople allegedly sought to destroy the image of Christ responsible.³³ The procession of Casas de Benítez and Pozoamargo was especially vulnerable to disappointment and ridicule because the stranger predicted a downpour that would occur at a given time and place.

This was not the normal expectation. Historically, communities made a graduated series of responses to drought, starting with prayers and processions in the church or cathedral, the display of relics or images for veneration, movement of images from one church (often a rural shrine) to another (the parish church or the cathedral) for a nine-day stay, and the joining of one image with another. In early modern Spain in some places the images or relics were bathed in springs,

streams, or rivers. And everywhere if the drought persisted there could be increasing degrees of public penance. In this graduated series some responses could be made over and over, and it was simply a matter of praying, praying to different saints, or praying more fervently, until the drought ended.³⁴

Reports of these processions in shrine histories and town and city chronicles like those of Seville and Barcelona do mention failures in passing. For failures were part of a serial trial and error diagnosis to identify the saint willing to help the town, typically moving up from specialized lesser saints to more important and more generally powerful images or relics. When all else failed, the town would try saints hitherto ignored or forgotten, and present more extreme penitential behavior and displays of emotion. The question was not whether the prayers would eventually work, but which saints, accompanied by which penitential practices, would prove effective. The discovery of an unexpected saint whose intercession led to rain in a spectacular manner could lead to a new vow for the observance of the saint's day or the day the saint produced rain.³⁵

The processions themselves could be fraught with excitement. Miracles such as those in Quero in 1931 occurred in rain processions throughout the early modern period. They were understood as a side-effect of collective prayer and penance that opened the heart

of the divine. An eighteenth-century survey of shrines in Aragon includes several examples. In 1703, during a procession to return an image of Christ, loaves of bread distributed to participants seemed to multiply. In 1710, as an image of Mary being brought to town passed by, a dying woman was healed. In 1713, a Protestant soldier converted after seeing the results of rain processions at a Marian shrine. In 1737, a blind woman gained her sight as an image of Mary returned to its shrine. In another town no one was injured when a bridge collapsed just after a procession with an image of Mary had crossed it, and then there was a downpour when the image reached the church in town.³⁶ And in a diocesan seat in the 1730s, when the crucifix of the Franciscans was carried in rain processions, “they put the children who have hernias in the middle of the street, and many are cured when the Holy Image passes over them.”³⁷ In early modern Spain, rain processions were also one of the prime times for images to exude miraculous sweat, as we see here outside a town in Andalusia in 1698 (*Fig. 3*).

In early twentieth-century New Castile, there were two kinds of Catholic newspaper reports about rain supplications: those that simply mentioned the fact that they were in process, and those that celebrated their success. The processions interrupted or immediately followed by rain were cited as proof of God’s power, the

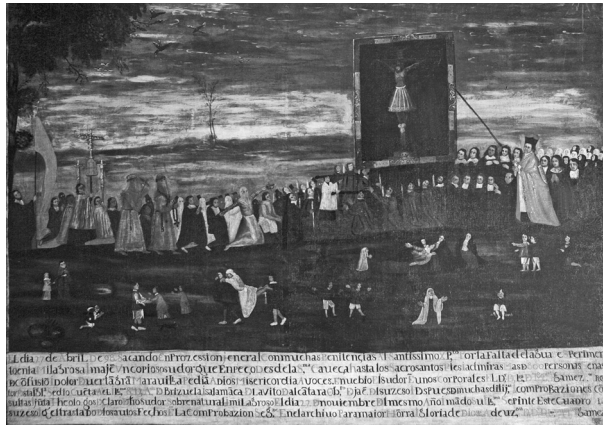


Fig. 3. The miraculous sweating of the Christ of Burgos in a petitionary procession for rain on April 27, 1698. Oil on canvas, c. 1698, artist unknown. Church of Nuestra Señora de la Expectación y Santuario del Stmo. Cristo de Burgos, Cabra del Cristo Santo (Jaén). Photo: Pedro Gila. By permission, Pedro Gila, the Parish of Nuestra Señora de la Expectación, and Diocese of Jaén.

force of prayer, and a demonstration of the special protection of the town by the saint it called upon for help that corresponded to the town's confidence and love. If the procession was successful, there would generally be a solemn Mass sung in thanks, followed by a celebratory procession to return the image to the shrine, and a final, often emotional homily. In cases of spectacular success, a collection might be taken and preachers from Madrid or the diocesan seat brought in for the sermon, an orchestra hired for the Mass, and outside, municipal bands hired for the procession.³⁸

The processions were generally civic acts, requested of town councils first by farmers, sometimes through brotherhoods, and paid for by town and city govern-

ments, with the mayor and town council leading the procession. The town council would request prayers for rain from the town clergy, and, not without occasional conflict, the clergy would set the schedule and the protocol for the supplications.³⁹

The Catholic newspaper reports generally praise the preacher and emphasize that the processions were comprehensive, including the humble and the wealthy. There is a deep history for this, for in the early modern period, both annual processions made because of vows and processions made because of an urgent necessity were considered to require the full participation of the community to be effective. This participation was variously achieved by fining households that did not send a member or offering incentives of indulgences or food.⁴⁰ However, by the twentieth century there is a crucial difference. In a radically changed ideological landscape, Catholic newspaper reports of weather amenable to prayer surely served for believing readers to reconfirm the very existence and power of God.

Conversely, for the left, prayers for rain (or for rain to stop, or to avoid hail) were part of a long-term strategy of the clergy, seen as cynical manipulators who used weather as social control, a strategy whose deconstruction could be a way to raise the consciousness of peasants and rural laborers. As a village cor-

respondent for the socialist weekly of Zaragoza wrote in December 1932, “Hail, the harvest, drought, etc. have been manipulated by [the clergy] in their belligerent sermons to scare the poor peasant [into thinking] that God was punishing him for straying from the path of righteousness. And if the opposite should happen, hah! then God was rewarding with generosity his submissive lambs.”⁴¹ The writers of this Republican literature tended to be liberal professionals whose knowledge of agriculture was at best theoretical. In their attacks on the rural clergy they often ended up ridiculing the peasantry as well.

In addition to its value as a procession without rain, an innovative procedure that did not pan out, and a vision unconfirmed, Toribia’s vision was unusual in its time for who she was, what appeared to her, and how they interacted.

Toribia’s vision was unlike that of the other seers we know about in 1931, who were by and large children or adolescents who seemed to have been influenced by the modern visions of Lourdes and Fatima and subsequently Ezquioga. News of these famous visions was available in a variety of ways—whether pious magazines, local grottos, pilgrims’ reports, holy cards, postcards, magic lantern shows or films. Instead, Toribia’s story was a throwback to older patterns: apparitions of saints and Mary to anonymous,

often marginal laypersons in the countryside of Spain and Southern Europe in the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries requesting processions to solve local group problems. Most of those visions that are documented with notarized testimony occurred in the context of epidemics. Once the seers had convinced the authorities, the procession was made, the sign was in some way confirmed, and a new connection was set up between the town and the divine.

The documented events of this kind, several of them from New Castile, in which the seers are men or children, stand for a large number of undocumented ones, many of which survive as legends, in which the seers were adult laywomen, who throughout the medieval and early modern periods were taken less seriously by Church and civil authorities.⁴² Perhaps this is another reason why Toribia was unnewsworthy and undocumented: she was a mature married woman.

The Inquisition closed down this system for contact with the divine at the start of the sixteenth century, prosecuting among others lay seers in towns 60 to 80 kilometers to the northwest of Casas de Benítez.⁴³ But most of the documented late medieval cases differ from Toribia's in that the beings that appeared were clearly not human: they were diminutive, the size of statues, or gave off powerful light or had special powers.



Fig. 4. The vision of an angel, Ayora, engraving in Perales, *Memorias de la aparición de un ángel en la Villa de Ayora* (Murcia, Juan Vicente Teruel, c. 1810), from a painting by Vicente López Portaño.

However, some involved male figures in human guise, subsequently assumed to be angels. A case similar to that of Toribia (the seer this time an older woman in her garden, and the solution a procession) was believed to have occurred in Ayora, 100 kilometers south-east of Casas de Benítez. There an older woman named Liñana supposedly arrived at her garden off the main road to the north to find a young man who told her to tell the town authorities to hold an annual procession to that spot in order to end the plague. When she said they would not believe her, he wrote a message on her hand. The story, said to take place in January 1392, was known by the end of the sixteenth century. A painting of the Guardian Angel of Ayora by Vicente López in 1802 hangs in the parish church, and on the site of the vision there is a chapel to the Angel.⁴⁴ (Fig. 4)

This encounter did not involve drought. Nor did a less similar but better documented one in 1460 in Jafre, Catalonia, in which a wayfarer, also in the context of an epidemic, indicated that water from a spring would heal people.⁴⁵ Droughts do not seem to have generated quite the same level of anxiety or the same level of documentation as epidemics in which death was imminent. But with people actively casting about for a helper, it should not be surprising that some rain processions originated in visions as well.⁴⁶

The story from the town of Piera in Catalonia is similar to that of Casas de Benítez (the seer an elderly woman, the vision a male wayfarer who asks for food, the context a drought, the solution a procession). The original Sant Crist de Piera, burned in the Spanish Civil War, was a striking image from the late fourteenth century or early fifteenth century of a Christ in agony. It was taken out from the parish church in procession in time of drought, and only in time of drought, from at least 1691 on. A photograph captures a key moment in a rain procession around 1905, as the image comes out of the church in the presence of a bishop and numerous priests from surrounding towns who have come with their parishioners (*Fig. 5*).

In the story, as told in Piera since at least the 1700s,⁴⁷ during a drought that had lasted two years, a youth dressed as a poor pilgrim knocked at the door of the



Fig. 5. The Christ of Piera leaving shrine for rain procession, c. 1905–1910. Photo: Sagarra.

virtuous widow Maria Lleopart, who lived in a hamlet 12 kilometers from the Piera center. He asked for alms or bread, but she said she had not even a crust. The pilgrim told her that the Lord would provide rain if they held a solemn procession with a particular image of Christ that lay abandoned in a corner in the hospice of Saint Francis on the edge of Piera. The pilgrim said as proof she should look in her pantry. She knew there was nothing there, but the youth insisted. She went inside and found there was indeed bread, but when she came back out the pilgrim had disappeared. Lleopart told the priest and the town authorities in Piera, who located the image and took it out in procession on April 28. This eighteenth-century print shows the Christ, the procession, and in the right foreground, a pilgrim with wings pointing the farmwoman to the Christ (*Figs. 6–7*).

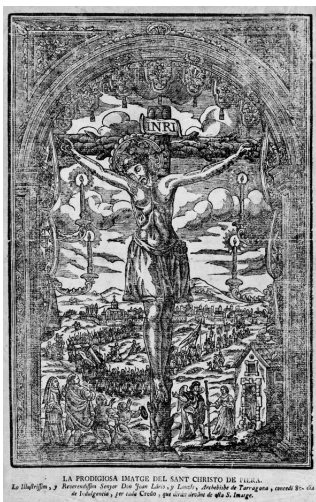


Fig. 7. Sant Crist de Piera, detail of apparition. By permission, Biblioteca de Catalunya.

Fig. 6. Sant Crist de Piera. By permission, Biblioteca de Catalunya.

In almost all of these apparition narratives, the encounter takes place outside of town, in a space for gardens, sheep, and wayfarers, and the message draws the citizens of the town, with their images, out into the countryside. Away from the town, the townspeople embody their polity, unprotected by buildings, and are vulnerable to the elements, like a hermit crab out of its shell. Their society, in careful hierarchy, is made visible to them and made available for depiction in these prints and paintings (*Fig. 8*).

Stories like these clearly influenced a transhumant shepherd from Taravilla in the Diocese of Cuenca, Francisco Martínez, age thirty-four, in his attempt to become a shrine keeper and alms gatherer. According to his confession to the Inquisition in 1728, a pilgrim asked him for water, and “this led me to spread the



Fig. 8. Sant Crist de Piera, detail of procession. By permission, Biblioteca de Catalunya.

idea that the pilgrim had revealed certain things to me, among others that it would rain as surely as the holy Christ I wore was sweating blood.”⁴⁸ For months before the Inquisition was called in, he had been telling everyone the invented story, even a notary public who wrote it down.⁴⁹

Last November, I was guarding pastureland in Villa de San Esteban in Andalusia in which a flock [from the town of the notary, Molina de Aragón], was going to winter. One evening, as I finished saying my Rosary and three Credos seated in the doorway of the farm compound near the pastureland, I heard a voice and turned to see a pilgrim who asked in God’s name for a little water. I answered, “I wish that the Lord would send water for the fields as he keeps it in springs for sinners,” and went inside and brought out

a full earthenware pitcher. He drank about a quarter of it. And when I came out again, I asked him if it had rained where he had come from. And he said that in some places it had rained, in others no, and that in this area it would rain around Saint Lucy's day.

Martínez claimed the pilgrim went on to reveal that the crucifix that Martínez was wearing would bleed and that there would be a great miracle wherever Martínez was on Ascension Day, and then departed. When Martínez went inside he found that the pitcher the pilgrim had drunk from had refilled miraculously.

Asked what the pilgrim looked like, Martínez described what seems to be a painting or statue, in fact a kind of pilgrim version of Vicente López's painting of the Angel of Ayora:⁵⁰ "He was about eighteen years old, with very light hair, eyebrows and beard, wearing a tunic that was purplish white—how it was cinched I did not notice—with black eyes turned toward heaven, cheeks white and rosy, feet bare and without hose, and holding a pilgrim staff topped by a well-worn ball." He also described a Caravaca cross on the pilgrim's cape.

From late medieval visions to the stories of Ayora and Piera and the fabulations of Francisco Martínez we recognize a kind of lineage. The naturalness of the way the people of Casas de Benítez, Pozoamargo and

the surrounding towns considered, weighed, and acted on Toribia's vision, and the nonjudgmental openness of its people now when reporting and discussing it, leads us to suppose that there were other such episodes, in a *longue-durée* dialogue between story and event.

And indeed there was a similar vision in a town in the same region, near Toledo, four years after that of Toribia, and one year before the Spanish Civil War. The Madrid illustrated weekly *Estampa* reported a mysterious visitor with news of water.⁵¹ The encounter took place outside the village of Burguillos, 12 kilometers from Toledo and 165 kilometers northwest of Casas de Benítez. It too was a very local event, and it had even fewer repercussions; as far as I or the seer's family know, no other publication mentioned it. *Estampa* padded out its somewhat anticlimactic story with photographs of the seers of Ezquioga, Beauraing, Fatima, and Lourdes (Fig. 9).

On Monday of Holy Week, a sixteen-year-old boy, Fausto del Castillo, was helping some young men who were digging a well, and they sent him to a



Fig. 9. "Apparitions in Toledo; a boy from Burguillos says Jesus Christ appeared to him four times." *Estampa* (Madrid), May 25, 1935.

spring for water. There, he said, he encountered an old pilgrim, erect and silent, with a long gray beard and white hair, wearing a brown habit and sandals. The pilgrim made two abrupt inquiries and one observation⁵² —"Who are you getting that water for? Does the well have water yet? Soon it will,"—and walked off downstream.

The next day the pilgrim was at the spring again, this time barefoot, wearing a purple habit. He asked again about the well, again said it would give water, and asked for a drink, drinking three times from a tin cup. He told Fausto to go to Mass the next morning and hear it on his knees. This time Fausto told his family (his parents had a grocery shop) and friends, saying over and over, "It is Jesus Christ!"⁵³ Half of the town believed him, the other half was skeptical.

On Wednesday he heard Mass as instructed and went to the spring with his young brother and a friend who had made fun of the visions. There was no one there, and they filled the water jug, but on the way back, when his friend was laughing, Fausto felt a blow to his cheek and fell unconscious, the jug breaking. The workers revived him, and further along he met the pilgrim, who said the slap was for not going alone. There were marks of fingers on Fausto's cheek, and people came from the surrounding towns to hear his story, but he was glum and taciturn.

The next two days he stayed home, but when he went out early on Saturday to feed the family horse, the pilgrim was on the road, and the boy pleaded to know what he wanted. "I'll tell you what I want. Don't be afraid of me."⁵⁴ But that turned out to be Fausto's last vision, and when the reporter and photographer came from Madrid and talked to his family, he was morose.

In June 2010, I went to Burguillos with a friend who is an anthropologist, her friend who lives in Toledo, and a friend of her friend who lives in Burguillos. There we talked to Elena del Castillo, Fausto's niece, who told the story as she knew it before I showed her the magazine article, which she knew about but had not seen. Her mother, Fausto's sister, died when Elena was fourteen. Elena's father and his two brothers were the ones who in 1935 had been digging the well and had sent Fausto for water.⁵⁵ Elena was told by her father that Fausto had come back frightened from the spring, saying he had had an apparition of a friar and that the water jug had broken. One of her uncles had gone to check, and had seen no one.

Elena had a photo of Fausto in a Republican military uniform, and it is published in the town's photographic history book.⁵⁶ As in Casas de Benítez, in Burguillos all the images in the church were burned. When Franco's troops took Toledo, two of Elena's uncles, the two who had been digging the well with her father,

were imprisoned and later taken out and shot. Fausto went into exile in France and came for visits only in the 1970s. They never dared ask him about his visions, and he never mentioned them to his wife and children, who read the article in a library in Toledo and went to see the spring, but had not brought up the matter with him. Whatever else Fausto had to tell he took to his grave.

How do patterns like these span centuries? What links these disparate places and times is what was a minority topos. As far as I know the pattern is unidentified and uncollected in the voluminous pious literature on saints, shrines and miracles. Is this lack of attention because such visions were too rare, or far apart in time or space, or because rain visions as opposed to plague visions tended not to be recorded? People see and hear strange things all the time, but how is it that they see and hear things so similar—similar enough to be recognizable, and with enough individual touches (broad beans, the filled bread cupboard, the writing on the hand, the full pitcher, the broken water jug, the slap marks on the face) to make each distinctive?

First of all the basic scenario of wayfaring strangers is common to the entire period from the Middle Ages to the Spanish Civil War. Among other wayfarers who were strangers to varying degrees (transhumant shepherds, harvest laborers, beggars, Roma, peddlers, tinkers, and later also traveling salesmen, fair peo-

ple, itinerant photographers, circus and theater troupes), individual pilgrims, perhaps crossing New Castile on the way to Guadalupe or Santiago, would have been the least likely to have passed by before. In this sense they were the strangest of the strange.

But most Spaniards for the last five hundred years at least would have known what they were immediately from their dress, the same as that of the popular Saint Roch. In 1590 the Crown attempted to cut down on vagabondage by forbidding the use of traditional costume for Spanish pilgrims, but still permitting it for foreigners. It included “a cape and habit of rough woolen cloth, a broad hat with insignias and a pilgrim’s staff.”⁵⁷ Well into the twentieth century (and, with the revival of the pilgrimage to Santiago, now all over again), there were classic, bearded pilgrims like this one photographed at Roncesvalles around 1900.⁵⁸ (*Fig. 10.*) In my circulation through shrines in the 1960s, people still recalled them. There was an idea that they might be holy, like marabouts or the mendicant friars with similar habits, and there are local



Fig. 10. “Basque Country; Pilgrim to Saint James of Compostela at Roncesvalles.” Photo: Ouvrard. Postcard sent from Biarritz in 1904.

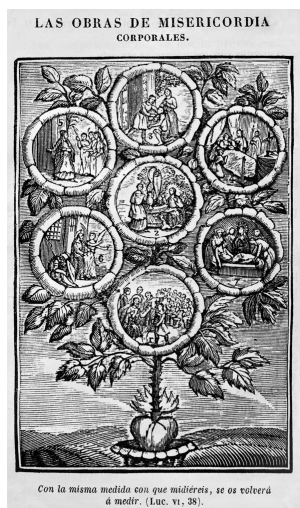


Fig. 12. Give drink to the thirsty. Claret, *Catecismo*, The corporal works of mercy, detail.

Fig. 11. The corporal works of mercy. Antonio María Claret, *Catecismo de Doctrina Cristiana*, Barcelona 1852, 440.

cults based on actual pilgrims, women as well as men, whether dedicated to pilgrims themselves as saints⁵⁹ or to relics or images they left behind.⁶⁰ On my own walk to Santiago in 1965, even without a habit or a beard I was treated with considerable respect and curiosity.⁶¹

The deep penetration of these ideas among Spaniards can be seen from a catechism of Antonio María Claret, with numerous printings from 1848 until the 1936 Civil War. The seven Corporal Works of Mercy include feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, and giving shelter to pilgrims. Claret's catechism came illustrated with woodcuts and commentaries that exemplify the kind of Biblical grounding, prevalent in earlier clerical discourse, for the patterns we have been seeing (*Fig. 11*).

The man asking for drink (as at Burguillos) has a halo, and the commentary explains it is Christ before the Samaritan woman at the well at Sicar, who does not know who he is and turns him down (John 4:10) (Fig. 12). The commentary admonishes: “remember that every poor person represents Jesus Christ; you would not be the first person of whom Jesus Christ, in the guise of a beggar, asked for alms.”⁶² In Spain this conflation of beggars with holy people was enacted in various ways. In Caldes de Montbui a brotherhood had twelve beggars walk in its annual procession to represent the twelve apostles until the custom was banned as irreverent and profane in 1771.⁶³ But throughout the twentieth century on Maundy Thursday priests and bishops washed the feet of beggars who represented the twelve apostles, as King Alfonso XIII did in a grand annual ceremony until he went into exile in 1931.⁶⁴ And the idea that pilgrims or beggars, asking door to door for alms or food, might be Christ or a male saint was expressed throughout Spain every year in the Christmas begging requests of children, known as “The Pilgrim’s Prayer.”⁶⁵



Fig. 13. Give shelter to pilgrims. Claret, *Catecismo*, The corporal works of mercy, detail.

The three pilgrims asking for lodging have wings, and the commentary is worth citing at length.⁶⁶

The fifth [Corporal Work of Mercy] is: to give shelter to the pilgrim. Picture n° 5 shows the Patriarch Abraham giving lodging to some pilgrims that he thought were men who were in fact Angels of the Lord. God so valued Abraham for this act of mercy that he promised nothing less than to make him the father of numerous descendents and shower him with worldly and spiritual benefits. This is how God rewards the acts of charity so pleasing to him and the Angels! The inhabitants of the castle at Emmaus, as well, thought that it was a man, a pilgrim to whom they gave lodging, but in fact it was Jesus Christ himself, resurrected three days before,⁶⁷ just as Saint Gregory thought he was giving shelter to three pilgrims and then found they were angels. Happy are they who do such works of charity, for God in turn will give them eternal lodging in his heavenly palace.

Pilgrims are absent both in the biblical passages and in the Golden Legend stories about Saint Gregory that Claret refers to. In Spain, this conflation of wayfarers and pilgrims is perhaps due to the number of pilgrim wayfarers. And surely by Claret's time it is affected by the very strength of the Spanish pilgrim-

angel stories we have examined.

In early modern New Castile there was another topos, which seems to have developed in the seventeenth century, of pilgrims (subsequently thought to be angels) who left paintings or charcoal drawings of crucifixes on the walls where they stayed, which in turn became the basis for shrines.⁶⁸ Elsewhere in Spain, as in Mexico, the topos, which applied to some of the region's most revered crucifixes, was that at some time in the distant past a pair of pilgrims had come, offered to make an image, retired to an enclosed room for three days, and disappeared, leaving the new image in the room.⁶⁹ These stories gave a heavenly pedigree to already revered images, and seem to have been the seventeenth-century equivalent of the older notion that certain images had been painted by Nicodemus or Saint Luke.

Claret's biblical model for feeding the hungry is Christ feeding the people on the mount where he delivered the beatitudes. This distribution of loaves is itself a model for the distributions of charity food at Spanish shrines made because of vows, for those handed out during some of the rain processions (we



Fig. 14. Feed the hungry. Claret, *Catecismo*, The corporal works of mercy, detail.

even saw that the multiplication of these loaves was a side-miracle in one procession), and indeed for the charity flat cakes handed out by Toribia every year at the Casas de Benítez church. In this perspective, Toribia feeding the stranger Christ broad beans and her fellow citizens *torta* on the day of Christ's resurrection were of a piece (*Fig. 14*).

The Casas de Benítez, Piera Ayora, and Burguillos stories seem to show a deeper, more universal pattern from fairy tales. It is like stories of beggars, men or women, who ask for alms or food, and then turn out to be fairies who grant three wishes as a reward for generosity, following patterns identified by folklorists.⁷⁰ The folklorist Carmen Blacker, who writes of a similar pattern in Japan, summarizes the European pattern: "a noble, holy Stranger wanders about the world disguised as a beggar, rewarding kind treatment with blessings and requiting unkind treatment with curses."⁷¹ We know of examples from Hungary as well as Spain, in which Christ stops to ask a cowherd for a cup of water and rewards or punishes him according to his response.⁷²

Similarly in Casas de Benítez the belief exists that Roma women begging door to door can cast an evil eye on children if they are refused. One means of protection in the village that Pascual Martínez reports was for children to wear a small pouch around the

neck with a piece of bread in it, and in the late 1930s some of the bread used was Toribia's.⁷³

In the cases we have studied the notion of punishment by the mysterious stranger is largely implicit. Toribia, after all gave the broad beans, Fausto at Burguillos and Francisco Martínez the shepherd gave water, and Maria Lleopart was ready to give bread. But the visitor at Burguillos knocked Fausto unconscious because he brought a disbelieving friend. The biblical models contain examples of rejection as well. The Samaritan woman at the well did not give the Christ/visitor water. And two of the angels welcomed by Abraham went on to Sodom, where people wanted to sodomize them, and after this final confirmation of its iniquity the city was destroyed. Spain, like much of Europe, has many locations where towns were reputedly destroyed or sunken in lakes as divine punishment, and since the Middle Ages the countryside has been strewn with villages abandoned for one reason or another.⁷⁴ In light of all this, and after the devastating hailstorm two years before, some people in Casas de Benítez and Pozoamargo may have asked themselves not only what they had to gain if they followed Toribia's instructions but also what they had to lose if they did not.

Addressing the puzzling similarities between European and Japanese stories of this nature, Blacker speculates whether there might be some common

deeper, older prototype. "A traveling god, for example, who is expected to descend into the village from his own world at a fixed season, and who requires the correct ritual of hospitality and offerings to dispense the seasonal blessings that the village needs; a god who will, further, if the correct ritual is denied him, blast the offending village with curses."⁷⁵ Here she may have reached too far, for the basic situation of the supplicant wayfarer is so common and the notion that outsiders can have special powers so prevalent (and so useful for wayfarers to cultivate) that such patterns could arise independently in distant cultures. Indeed, this opening (and here we are smack-dab in Natalie-Davis-land) has been amply cultivated by tricksters from afar in all cultures, from the bandit Christ and his twelve disciples that circulated in sixteenth-century Spain confessing and purloining, to the picaresque freeloaders that led to the banning of pilgrim habits, to the kinds of fake princes, con-artists and mysterious strangers described along the Mississippi by Mark Twain. Such impostures thrived for the same reasons that people had visions of pilgrim angels and stranger Christs and that others believed them when they said so. As a stranger from afar who has knocked unannounced on many doors, I can testify to the generous legacy of sacred hospitality in Spain. And the beggars who bless and curse

according to how they are treated derive their authority from the same matrix.⁷⁶

The pilgrim/angel, the stranger/Christ, the youth/angel are ambiguous beings, half human, half divine, appropriate messengers for heavenly instructions. Their visits to New Castile in the “real” time of 1460 in Jafre and the 1930s in Casas de Benítez and Burguillos, in the oral traditions of Piera and Ayora, and in the 1727 fabulations of the shepherd Francisco Martínez are examples of one remarkably durable way that Spaniards have reported connections to heaven. Others in recent years include bright or lovely ladies to prevent the plague, the furious army of Diana, still seen in Galicia, ghosts who need help to get out of purgatory, and, as almost everywhere in the world, the recent dead who bring comfort and affection.

As Natalie Davis has shown, stories are more than disembodied folktales from a never-neverland devoid of time or place; they are patterns for seeing, hearing, and behaving. These patterns sometime become more evident when the real-life version does not quite end as it should. “History” is made up of recognizable events that, once recognized, are therefore recorded. Toribia’s and Fausto’s stories suggest the value of examining non-events—things not normally recorded because they do not conform to recognized patterns and therefore in which “nothing happened.”

Speaking of which, when Miguel, his cousin Marilina, Marisol and her husband and I went to La Poza to take pictures of the spot where the two processions met in 1931, it rained (*Fig. 15*).



Fig. 15. Rain on La Poza, Casas de Benítez (Cuenca), February 8, 2010.
Photo: The author. By permission.

Chapter 2

Images as Beings: Blood, Sweat, and Tears¹

Toribia del Val introduced one of the ways of connecting with the divine: the visit of a supernatural with counsel and instructions for a specific purpose, in her case to end a drought in 1931. Because Toribia saw the visitor and no one else did, we call this a vision, or, from the point of view of a believer, an apparition.

Her vision introduced new information into the constellation of grace in the zone around Casas de Benítez. If all had gone well and rain had fallen as predicted, it would have enhanced local devotion to San Isidro and the Virgen de la Cabeza. For the district it would have added these sources of help, at least for rain, to those in already existing shrines like the Christ of Sisante, Our Lady of the Holy Spring in La Roda, and Our Lady of Riánsares in Tarancón. In an earlier time there might even have been a shrine built to the holy visitor in Toribia's garden, as there was to the Angel of Ayora.

One can imagine this constellation of grace, slowly changing from late antiquity on, as a bird's eye view of a nocturnal scene. Laid out on the landscape are lights, some brighter, some blinking, some dying out. Some are new, intense and brightly colored, others steady and constant for centuries. Some are isolated in the mountains like a beacon, other in bright clusters in cities with Rome and Jerusalem shining in the distance. The lights are sources of supernatural help; their intensity varies according to their power to resolve human needs and provide salvation.

This constellation is in constant renewal, as old grace is exhausted or routinized, and new material replaces it in a system that, whatever the mix of lights, provides consolation, divine company, and practical help. The sources of this help have slowly shifted over time, from a predominance of the bodies and relics of saints and the magnetic attraction of living saints, to representations of divine beings, icons, paintings, statues, or prints. These power sources had their tenders. Some were towns, cities, kingdoms for which the images were cherished protectors. Others were religious orders, brotherhoods, or secular shrine keepers for whom this power was the origin of income and prestige and a field for competition. In this constellation there is much dark matter that is not, or not yet, powerful: bones unrecognized as relics, relics that

do not heal anybody, strangers unrecognized as angels, children who may be saints, images no one cares about.

As time went on more and more Spaniards ceased to believe in this meta-physics and indeed considered it an obstacle to social and economic justice. The Spanish Civil War unleashed the wholesale destruction of the sources of divine power with a violence unique in European history: the killing of the clergy that maintained them, the systematic burning of images, and the desecration of holy places. But under Franco the lights came on again, and for believers they are still on now.

What does this dynamic system, constantly refreshed, look like on the ground? The expectation of new grace, the very latest in divine presence and help, translates into a general alertness among many believers to people and things that are more than they seem to be: the stranger or pilgrim who may be something else, the priest, nun, monk, or lay volunteer who may have a charisma for healing or prophecy, the image whose potential as a portal to heaven lies unrecognized. The recognition and propagation of new grace gives agency and provides excitement to active believers in Catholicism.

Here we will consider images, meaning any likeness of a divine figure—statue, painting, or engrav-

ing. Particular ones, not countless others, became special² in many of the same ways that particular relics became special, not others. They could come to stand out by the miracles they performed; by the way they were discovered; by their ritual shifting; by their promotion by saints, preachers, hermits, shrine keepers or lay enthusiasts; and by visions that identified them.³

In some images—as in Spain Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of Montserrat or the Christ of Burgos—this power was generally acknowledged, retroactively endowed with a legendary origin, and carefully managed by guardians, curtains and protocol. But in fact any religious image or cross, however humble, plain, or mass-produced, could at any moment reveal itself to be powerful and have a protective vocation for a person, family, group, or place.⁴ David Freedberg's *The Power of Images* and Carolyn Bynum's *Wonderful Blood* provide a sense of the immanence in some images, and Alfred Gell's *Art and Agency* discusses image's performative capacity. Let us here think of these images as part of a dynamic system in which some images hold onto power, others gradually relinquish it, and new or dormant ones announce it.

One way, people believed, the divine signaled that certain images had power was by those images activating and giving off liquids that seemed like tears, sweat

or blood. In this chapter we will compare instances in early modern Spain with others in twentieth-century Italy, Spain and France.⁵ The long history of these events stretched back to pre-Christian statues.⁶ In Spain they seem to have thrived from about 1590 to 1720, a period in which the Inquisition had throttled lay visions of Mary or saints (like that of Toribia) with messages of instruction and protection for the community. The animation of statues and paintings, in contrast, entailed no revelation and little challenge to community or Church structures of authority, which in fact it ended up strengthening. In their golden age most of the images involved were of Christ or the Sorrowing Mother. It coincided with the apogee of penitential brotherhoods and a series of droughts, epidemics, intercommunal conflict and wars.⁷ It was a period in which images were designed, dressed and choreographed in sacred pageants, rituals, dances, and processions as if they were active, lifelike presences that could interact with humans and with each other.⁸

The careful documentation of many of these events contrasts with and may well be related to the public debunking of such miracles in northern Europe. For instance, in England, in 1538, there was a demonstration in a marketplace that the eyes and lips of a famous crucifix were moved “by strings of hair.” And a famous relic of blood, supposedly that of Christ, was shown

not to be blood at all, “but honey clarified and colored with saffron in the form of a gum.” Similarly, in 1545, a priest was sentenced to wear about his neck a broad stole of linen cloth colored with drops like blood. Theatrically quivering and shaking, he had pricked his finger so that blood dropped on the communion cloth as if from the consecrated host.⁹

A similar vein of skepticism had been expressed by some fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Spanish commentators. Perhaps the most influential was Alonso Fernández de Madrigal (c. 1410–1455), whose guide to confession was a standard work well into the sixteenth century. In his commentary on the First Commandment he wrote against idolatry (“when people have more devotion for one image than another, they sin”). And he addressed the notion “living” images in particular. “They say that the images weep and shed very sweet tears. But that is really water and honey that they put on them from behind, something hard to allow even when idols were adored. If only those who do this did nothing else wrong but make money; but what is above all worse is that they turn silly people into idolaters. Those who do this should not only be severely punished; but the earth should not have to suffer them. For an image cannot go and rescue captives, or move from a place unless they move it, or have any more awareness or feeling than a stone.”¹⁰

There were scornful Spanish Protestants as well, like Cipriano de Valera (“Oh ignorant blindness and blind ignorance! How many images have spoken? How many have sweated, even drops of blood? People believe that the Crucifix of Burgos’s beard, hair and even fingernails grow”).¹¹

But while in England and the Netherlands the debunking of these miracles led to the destruction of images, in early modern Spain and Italy their punctilious validation with witnesses enhanced the images involved to such an extent that most of them are still highly prized and venerated today in their hometowns. Sculptors and painters were called in to determine whether the manifestation might be a fraud or the natural result of resins, glues, varnishes, oils, and paints. And efforts were made to establish how the image had arrived in the town, to endow it with a story and a pedigree. This kind of judicial “proving” was in keeping with reinvigorated canonization and beatification procedures.¹² While the “pre-Trent” method for recording the water and blood on a crucifix on Mallorca involved civil affidavits with local notaries,¹³ the documentation after Trent was more elaborate and diocesan, with an eye, as it were, on the opposition.

In Igualada, a town in the province of Barcelona near Piera, a crucifix bled in 1590 on Holy Thursday

night or Good Friday morning. The relatively small, previously unremarked crucifix belonged in the Rosary chapel and had been lent on Holy Thursday to the brotherhood of flagellants for their procession because nobody wanted to carry the big, heavy one in the Augustinian monastery. In the event, a volunteer eventually turned up to carry the heavy crucifix, and the smaller one was left in the monastery during the procession. Three or four hours later the smaller crucifix was retrieved and returned to the Rosary chapel, where it belonged, and placed where it could be “adored.” On Good Friday morning two women adoring it (probably kissing its feet) noticed on it blood-like drops and waterlike sweat. People who crowded in felt awe and fear and cried out to God for mercy. The clergy and town councilors took the image to the parish church and examined it with experts including a doctor, a painter, and two Augustinian friars. The waterlike sweat evaporated, but the red drops were thick, pliable, and moist inside. Blood from the flagellants was quickly ruled out, for when a painter placed blood from his finger on other images it dried and flaked, and these drops did not. The priests divided their time between the busy round of Good Friday rituals and repeated examinations of the crucifix.¹⁴

Thursday was the day that Christ was whipped, and clearly the people of the time saw this crucifix’s

animation as following the same dramatic script of the Passion that they themselves were acting out in their penitential processions.¹⁵ The doctor later testified that it seemed to him that morning that “the Christ was in great travail and agony, like people when they approach the hour of death and are about to give up their soul to our Lord, and that a change came over the entire body, and then the entire face seemed to shine.”¹⁶ On Friday the Augustinians asked to observe the crucifix at three in the afternoon, “which was the time that Christ died, to see if the figure showed any signs.”¹⁷

The parish priest wrote to the bishop in Vic for instructions, with the hope that the crucifix “would be venerated and given reverence by all Christian believers, and would serve to increase and edify the Holy Catholic Faith.” In reply the bishop insisted on a careful investigation, because if the miracle turned out to be a fraud, “the enemies of the Holy Catholic faith would make fun and be confirmed in their damnable error.”¹⁸ Among the witnesses was a priest who remembered the crucifix as it used to be. Before, “it was a very dark face, and full of fly bites; and now it is white as if just made by a master artist, and very changed from what it used to look like.”¹⁹ As a result of the events and their validation, an unnamed, run-of-the-mill crucifix became the Sant Crist d’Igualada.

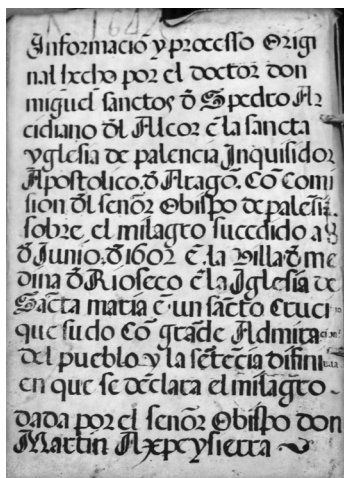


Fig. 16. Cover of the *Información*, or notarized testimony, regarding the sweating of the Christ of Castilviejo after a petitionary procession for rain, 1602. Municipal Archive, Medina de Rioseco (Valladolid). Photo: The author.

We have seen that drought processions were the occasions for miracles in general and for the activation of images in particular. The case in Mallorca cited above was during a drought, as was that of the Christ of Burgos in a town in Jaén in 1698.²⁰ Perhaps the best-known instance was on June 8, 1602, when a crucifix in the town of Medina de Rioseco sweated and seemed to be in anguish after the third of a series of

processions. Diocesan and town officials took more than five hundred manuscript pages of testimony from forty-seven men, including two painters, a sculptor, two doctors, fourteen priests, five friars, four licenciates, three town officials, four notaries, four members of the brotherhood that owned the crucifix, and just three women (Fig. 16). A barefoot Carmelite friar testified that when he had prayed in the church before the crucifix, it had the “the same countenance and severity and the same figure as always,” but that when the crucifix went by in the procession, “it seemed not the same one that he had seen in the church an hour and a half

before, because it was very upset and the hairs of the beard more disordered and his precious countenance more upturned." An hour later a woman, one of the three called to testify, was the first to see that the image, resting in a church, was sweating.²¹

The prosecutor assigned by the bishop to argue against a formal enquiry said that the miracle was unnecessary since the people were already convinced Christians; that the testimony was repetitive, which showed it was not secret; that liquid could issue naturally from wood; and that it was first proclaimed by a brotherhood member, an interested party because the brotherhood owned the image. He also made one argument that certainly applies to all these investigations: that it was to the interest of everyone in the town that the miracle be approved because it would draw pilgrims from afar. "The witnesses . . . are all citizens of the town of Medina de Rioseco and hence impassioned in what they say . . . thinking to enrich the chapel where the image is kept with the alms and gifts."²²

The lawyer who answered him for the town agreed that the result would be a regional shrine but thought this a proper reason for a miracle. His defense of this way of singling out special images points to an underlying dynamic in all the cases in this period, that these miracles were first and foremost emblems for civic pride.

I agree that the faith is firm in these kingdoms, yet our laxity in attending things in God's service and holy worship is such that sometimes miracles are necessary... And by this means Our Lord is accustomed to attract people from other towns, for in this kind of situation we see that people flock to visit the images by which Our Lord works his miracles not only from the places where they occur, but also from the others in the district and from all the area where the fame of the miracle is made known and spreads. And by these cases and supernatural events, although all images should be esteemed and revered with much respect for what they represent, particularly those [images] by which Our Lord works miracles like these are respected and held in greater devotion and in the chapels where they are kept much penance is done, Masses and sermons are said, and prayers are made, attracting and bringing together towns in these churches and houses of prayer, and giving alms and doing other pious and holy works by which Our Lord is praised and served.²³

The formal proceeding in Palencia went ahead, and on August 21 the bishop, after consultation with thirteen experts, declared that, "the sweat and drops of water ... were seen clearly and patently all over the body of the holy crucifix and that when wiped off by the priests

with altar cloths, the places wiped off became moist again and new drops emerged there, and that although people jogged and moved the holy crucifix, the drops of water and sweat did not fall off, but were seen to cling to it, and also the face of the Christ was seen to be afflicted in anguish and transformed, to the wonder and shock of all who saw it, and the face looked different from the way it was before and after.”

He therefore proclaimed that “this occurrence should be considered a miracle that Our Lord Jesus Christ was served to do and work in his holy image and figure for the good of the Christian faithful” and ordered “all the faithful Christians of our diocese to venerate and hold it a miracle, and that it be written and put on a board on display . . . for the greater cult and veneration of his holy image.”²⁴ The miracle testimony is a prized manuscript book in the municipal archive, and the stained altar cloth is kept as a relic in the sacristy of the church where the sweat was first noticed (*Fig. 17*).



Fig. 17. Rev. Gabriel Pellitero with a relic of the altar cloth used in 1602 to wipe sweat from the Christ of Castilviejo, parish church of Santa María Mediavilla, Medina de Rioseco (Valladolid). Photo: The author. October 27, 1981. By permission.

What we are seeing, then, is a process whereby images become more special and shine in the constellation of grace, one way that, in the town lawyer's words, images "become respected and are held in greater devotion." He was aware that it happened elsewhere and not only in Spain. Pamphlets and published newsletters brought to public notice other instances in Italy, Mexico, and Goa, along with speculation about what they might mean as omens or portents. It was happening in Hungary as well, with a notable case in Győr in 1697 with a Madonna left in the cathedral by an exiled Irish bishop.²⁵

Not only did old images become active, but so did new ones. Around 1607 a priest who was born in Munébrega (Zaragoza) had a painting of Ignatius Loyola hung with those of other founders of religious orders in the church sacristy. In 1623, a year after Loyola's canonization, the painting "sweated on the right side, under the arm, for four hours, and the sweat was an unusual liquid, that was neither water (though resembling it in color) nor oil, nor any other liquid that runs, but rather it welled out like some thick drops, and when they were wiped off, the same liquid welled out, and two cloths were made wet with it."²⁶ This occurred in days after the painting, placed on the altar by a Jesuit giving Lenten sermons, had begun to work miracles. While in the other cases studied miracles

followed the image activation, here they preceded it, but in both situations new power streaming through the image was what the activation was all about.

Not everyone thought that a painting on a board could work miracles, and included in the published accounts is what happened to a scoffer in Calatayud, who said when a friend recounted his visit to Munébrega, “What miracles can a *tabla* [painting or board] work?” and kneeling before a big board, which for many days had been leaning against the wall and could not easily be moved, said in contempt of the saint’s image, ‘*Tabla*, work miracles!’ And at once, the board fell on his head and a big blow made a big wound; and the wound to his body was the healing for his soul, straightened out by this means by God and Saint Ignatius, although the blasphemer, wary of the Inquisition, decamped from Calatayud. Reputable people from Calatayud who saw this are now in Madrid.”²⁷

A Jesuit commentator remarked on the congruence between the tenderness of their founder and the tenderness of the image, the capacity of their founder and the image to provoke tenderness and conversion in others, and the coincidence of the sweating with the martyrdom of Jesuits in Japan, Ethiopia, and the Indies.²⁸ His book, published forty years after the events, reported a miraculous origin for the painting—that it was suggested and made by a mysterious pilgrim pass-

ing through Calatayud, permitting us to catch and date the mysterious pilgrim myth in the act.²⁹

It may be useful to think of these events as transformations of potential to kinetic energy. Religious images, all of them, are deposits of potential energy, which here becomes kinetic in two ways, by the physical changes themselves, the liquid emerging or dripping (however or whoever produced them), and by the signal that this change gives to people who thereby learn of the image's available power and tap into it with supplication, respect, affection, prayer, and vow.

By this time in Spain the notion that images, especially crucifixes, were apt to bleed was so widespread that an activation could become publicly accepted in spite of testimony to the contrary. On July 12, 1633, in Vic, a priest in the chapel of the hospital noticed that drops of blood had appeared on the paten and the corporals while he had said Mass; and when he knelt to pray to know whether it was a divine manifestation or a human fraud, even more drops appeared. He and the few persons present at Mass looked to see where they could have come from. He checked his own nose to make sure he was not bleeding. They noted in particular that the blood could not have come from the large crucifix over the altar, since it was set well away from the cloths and covered with a veil. All this the priest and the others present told the bishop who came to

hear their testimony. But already a legend was forming: a woman who had not seen the bleeding said she had heard in the market “that the Christ in the hospital had wept blood and water . . . and that at night she had heard the bell of the hospital ring twice.” The story of the bleeding Christ became local history, and although the crucifix had up until then received little devotion and almost no mention in the church records, until 1896 it was regularly brought out in petitionary processions for rainfall and against epidemics.³⁰

Spain in the 1640s, and especially the year 1640 itself, coinciding with the revolt of the Portuguese and the Catalans, saw an exceptional concentration of this kind of theophany, or at least of news about it. On March 4, Transfiguration Sunday, a wooden cross in El Bonillo underwent its own transfiguration (*Fig. 18*). According to the witnesses at the subsequent hearings, the cross was brought to the town by a woman who had moved to El Bonillo a decade earlier. She said she had been given the cross by a Franciscan who



Fig. 18. Miracle of the Christ of El Bonillo, by Vicente López Portaño, a. 1810. Oil on canvas. Parish church of Santa Catalina, El Bonillo (Albacete). Courtesy of Ayuntamiento del Bonillo.

had brought it from Rome. After she died, the cross belonged to her widowed, remarried, and now separated husband, Antón Díaz. Painted on the front with a crucifix and on the back with Christ's garments, the crown of thorns, and the instruments of the Passion, the cross by 1640 was considered special, and people asked to hold it when they were dying. Two years before, some recalled, they had seen a bright crucifix on a cloud above the owner's house.³¹

That Sunday morning, Díaz was sifting flour for bread when he looked up to see the crucifix sweating; he called in a neighbor woman and fetched a learned friar from the nearby Augustinian monastery who took the cross down and carried it into the light of the doorway. He saw that the body was covered with fine sweat, with larger drops on the arms and wounds, and that "the sweat boiled like that when an egg is baked in a fire."³² With his index finger, he took a drop from the wound on the left side and put it to his eyes, nose, and tongue, noting a celestial odor and taste and feeling great solace in his heart, then saw another drop emerge in the same place. He was greatly moved and wept profusely, his own reactions convincing him of the authenticity of the miracle. After Mass, five priests checked the back of the image and found it and the cloth and wall behind it dry. They noted the image was too far from the ground for a cat or other animal

to urinate on it (“as has happened on many such occasions”).³³ The priests took the cross to the parish church, warning its owner to confess his sins, for this was surely a sign.

After the phase in which the sweat seemed to boil out, lasting about two hours, the liquid remained crystal clear, the fine part “as when a man is hot and tired,”³⁴ and the larger drop on the side wound “shining like a silver sequin.”³⁵ The sweat did not dry when the cross was carried to the parish church, where it was placed on the main altar; and the same drops apparently remained for seventeen days. They did not freeze there, despite a severe frost that left the water in the baptismal font frozen solid. The drops seem to have formed a kind of “skin” that held in a “celestial” odor until they were broken or wiped off. The townspeople were unable to identify the odor, so it must have been a substance not normally available there, but they agreed the smell “consoled” and “comforted” them.³⁶

Informed by the parish priest, the archdiocesan council of Toledo (the archbishop was away leading the war against the Protestants in the Netherlands) had the parish priest take down testimony, which he did from six women and thirty-seven men, including a panel of painters.

Early on, when the image was unveiled and carried around inside the parish church, one man noted for

his devoutness saw seven stars brighter than the sun's rays around the image.³⁷ Six weeks after the sweating the image was being invoked in accidents as the Santo Cristo del Milagro. When a young painter from the town testified, he suggested it was more than an ordinary painting: "it is something supernatural and miraculous . . . every time that this witness has seen it, it has made his hair stand on end and put him in awe, because the head has the greatest beauty and aliveness that there is in all the art of painting."³⁸

The archdiocesan council decreed that the sweat and a man's remarkable survival from an accident could be publicized as miracles, and the two events could be depicted in paintings. A chapel was built for the image in the church, and eventually a painting by Vicente López commissioned of the moment in which the Augustinian looked at the crucifix in the house.³⁹

Holy Week was an appropriate time for an image of Christ to sweat or bleed. In 1644 another activation, this time with a painting of the Veronica, took place in the town of Osa de la Vega (Cuenca), about one hundred kilometers to the north from El Bonillo.⁴⁰ On Holy Thursday, while the matins ceremony was in progress (that is, as was later pointed out, at the same month, day, and hour as Christ sweated blood in the Garden of Gethsemane), a woman went to fetch a penitential tunic and cord for a male neighbor to wear

in the Vera Cruz brotherhood procession.⁴¹ She saw that the Veronica painting there was lit up and that there were drops of blood and water or sweat on it. The news led to acclamation and tumult. This time it was a Dominican who was called in, and he saw that “the countenance of Our Lord Jesus Christ was fiery and flushed, as when a person is very fatigued and tired, the face changing as with interior anguish.”⁴² Like the friar in El Bonillo, the Dominican tasted the liquid and put it in his eyes. Only he actually saw the liquid emerge. After the matins ceremony the parish priest took the image to the parish church and locked it away.

That night the penitential procession was exceptionally tearful and bloody. Fearful that the sweating was a bad omen or divine sorrow for their sins, people called out for divine mercy⁴³ and reproduced in their bodies the anguish of the image in a multiple mimesis between divine prototype, image taking life, and human penitents.⁴⁴ When the priest looked at the Veronica next, on Saturday morning, it again had blood and water on it; it sweated a third and final time that afternoon and the wet altar cloths were saved as relics. The painting was quickly put to work to repel a hailstorm. And a month after the sweating it was attracting a hundred supplicants daily and six hundred on feast days. In the first three months the parish priest recorded twenty miracles among the lame, the sick, and the blind.

As in El Bonillo, the diocese ordered a formal hearing, and on March 23, 1645, the bishop of Cuenca, backed by a synod, declared the event “a miracle with no suspicion of a natural cause within the limits of what the human frailty and discernment is able to understand and judge. And for this reason this painting is worthy of being placed in greater veneration than it is now.”⁴⁵

The next year yet another Christ sweated in New Castile. It too was noted in a Jesuit letter, right after mentions of a Christ that wept blood in Parma, a newborn child that declared “God is very angry,” and an earthquake in Livorno. “The Countess of Puñoenrostro told a Father from this school that in one of her villages named Alcobendas a Christ had sweated, and that several times when the curate wiped it off, it sweated anew. Would that God improve these omens!”⁴⁶

On Thursday, May 10, 1646, Ascension Day, on the occasion of a drought, the people of Alcobendas (like the people of Medina de Rioseco in 1602) went in procession to the shrine of Our Lady of the Peace, a fifteen-minute walk outside the town, to bring the shrine image back with them.⁴⁷ At the shrine, people said prayers not only to the main image but also to three Holy Week procession images—Our Lady of Soledad, Christ Carrying the Cross, and Christ at the Column. The Brotherhood of the Blood of Christ had

been storing these images there since their own chapel had collapsed several years before. The Christ at the Column was natural size; it had been made about forty years before and was normally taken out on the night of Holy Thursday.

It was about four in the afternoon and the procession with Our Lady of the Peace was just departing. A group of at least four women and some seasonal workers from districts to the south were still in the chapel praying to the remaining images. The women, known for their devoutness and charity, kissed the feet of the Christ at the Column and noticed that the image had taken on a humanness that it had not had before. The face was flushed and the eyes red, as if in anguish. Then they saw that it was sweating. The natural hair was wet, the neck moist, and, in particular, there was a drop of water on the right elbow.

One of them went out and called a former municipal leader. He came and saw the water, wiped it off with his handkerchief, and called the priest, who came in with his assistant and many people. The procession, with priests singing and devotional banners deployed, was by then about a hundred paces away. When it stopped, some people thought it was because of a fight, "as was common."⁴⁸

Inside the chapel, the priest examined the statue, touched a drop with his right index finger, showed it

to those present, and, in a gesture we now recognize, put it in his eye, "as a relic."⁴⁹ Note that by putting the drop of Christ's liquid into his eye, the priest, like the friars before him, was incorporating Christ's humors into his own, one more step into the complex mimicry involved (including the statue of the flagellation of Christ, which was normally carried about accompanied by men flagellating themselves). The priest's assistant also moistened his fingers, showed them to the people, and then moistened his own eye. The former municipal leader again wiped off the statue with his handkerchief, which he touched to his eyes and put inside his shirt. The people cried out, "Miracle! Miracle! The Christ is sweating!" and crowded into the chapel. They touched the image with rosaries and handkerchiefs. Weeping variously (they later testified) out of fear, tenderness, wonder, joy, or devotion, they asked for mercy. The clergy feared people would knock over the papier-mâché statue.⁵⁰ A notary, outside, was called in to confirm the sweat.

It was decided to bring the Christ image back to town in the procession. Outside, small drops continued to appear where they had been wiped off and also on the legs as well as on the arms and side. People who before had not been able to get close could confirm the miracle personally. Spontaneously people took off their shirts and flagellated themselves, walking before

the image. By the time the procession reached town, it was dark. The image was put in the parish church in the chapel of the Sweet Name of Jesus with many candles lit before it, and there it seemed to regain its composure.

The next day, Friday, May 11, 1646, the town officials petitioned the vicar-general in nearby Madrid for an official investigation, which was ordered at once. On Saturday the assistant vicar-general arrived in Alcobendas and issued a call for witnesses, including a blind woman who had been cured. Over two days he heard twenty-three witnesses, examined the image, and visited the shrine of Our Lady of the Peace.

During the month of May the parish church was filled daily with people from Alcobendas and the surrounding villages making petitions, ordering Masses, and bringing wax arms, legs, heads, and hearts as votive offerings. The brotherhood majordomo furnished people with ribbons as long as the image, and oil from the lamp for healing. People also took roses from in front of the image for sacred keepsakes. Testimony about healing miracles was taken on eight days in May and June from twenty-four men and thirteen women.⁵¹ All said they were convinced of the miraculousness of the sweat and the cures. They believed that the Christ at the Column wanted people to know they had a new protector in him and he would help them out “in ca-

lamitous times” and that they in turn should show him devotion.⁵² They dismissed the investigator’s queries about possible fraud on the part of the shrine keeper or the devout women (the former out of self-interest, the latter to gain credit as holy) and ruled out other natural causes such as humidity in the shrine, rain, holy water from the shrine entrance, water from the keeper cleaning the shrine, or holy water from a hyssop. According to one witness, those present at the miracle even seven weeks later still wept when remembering it, and no one murmured against it.

The investigator made his report on June 22, and it was evaluated by a Jesuit and a parish priest in Madrid, a Dominican from Salamanca, and a Minim from Alcalá de Henares. They confirmed the miraculous nature of the events and interpreted them as an indication that the image should be turned to for help. On September 13 the decision was read in public in Alcobendas with the vicar-general present. A transcript of the testimony was delivered to the town in November and, when I saw it, was still in the parish archive.

At Alcobendas it was women, who spent more time with images and were more likely to have closer emotional connections with them, who first discovered there was a liquid on the image, as at Osa de la Vega and Medina del Rioseco. But for these very reasons, and many others (ecclesiastical traditions of their

supposed foolishness, lack of criteria and emotionality, plus their overall lack of authority in the public sphere) municipal and Church authorities were less likely to believe women and called few as witnesses. When three women were the first to see a crucifix had a bloody sweat in Igualada in 1590, they later testified, they went out to the street “to find a man to see it, because we would not be believed.”⁵³

Most of the cases at this time, or at least the ones most publicized, seem to have involved images of Christ. His Passion, including sweating and bleeding, was after all the stuff of the central life story for European Catholics and the daily ritual acted out in their churches. In the shift in this period in Spain toward a greater devotion to Christ, these events served to “fix” devotion to Christ in particular images.⁵⁴

In addition to drought, Holy Week processions and the fervor of new miracles, there was an older, continued occasion for image activation: the imminent presence of external danger in the form of inter-communal strife or warfare. There were spates of image activation in 1520, 1525, and 1526 in towns and villages with high proportions of Moslem converts.⁵⁵ In 1631 a concocted story about a crucifix that allegedly cried out when under abuse by Portuguese conversos in Madrid became the pretext for a wholesale persecution.⁵⁶ And there were others in 1640 in Catalan



Fig. 19. Saint Francis receiving the stigmata. Unknown artist, c. 1680. Parish church, Traíd (Guadalajara). Image seen to sweat in 1710 and 1713. Photo: The author.

villages close to French or Castilian troops,⁵⁷ in 1675 and 1677 during the sieges of Oran by the Turks,⁵⁸ and during the protracted War of Spanish Succession at the start of the eighteenth century.⁵⁹

People related the sweating of a painting of Saint Francis in the parish priest's house in the village of Traíd from November 1 to December 10, 1710, for in-

stance, to decisive battles on December 8, 9 and 10 (*Fig. 19*). Franciscans immediately took notice, and simultaneous investigations were led by a representative of the diocese and a Franciscan from nearby Molina de Aragón, hearing a total of twenty-two witnesses, including three painters.⁶⁰

One account of the Traíd case placed its readers on warning, reviving a trope we have seen before: "Especially one must be careful about the sweating of images; because we know from experience that many are vain artifice, caused either by the blind affection that people have for an image to win it greater devotion, or by the hasty greed of shrine keepers or sextons, who

do not want to live by the sweat of their brow, but rather by the sweat of the image.”⁶¹

Indeed, as time went on, common sense seems to have reasserted itself, perhaps because of a general overload of instances and certainly in keeping with the deemphasis on images among a clergy increasingly influenced by French trends and increasingly scientific procedures for the evaluation of miracles in Rome.⁶² This decline of certified activations in the eighteenth century paralleled the decline of flagellation in Holy Week and petitionary processions.⁶³

For each “successful” image activation there were many “failed” ones, miracles interrupted. ⁶⁴ Some of them we can read about in cases brought before the Inquisition: *beatas* who put liquids on their devotional images to gain followers or be known as holy; shrine keepers who put blood on images to make them popular; and private individuals who did so with private images for pious reasons or to become shrine keepers. One of the latter was Francisco Martínez, the transhumant shepherd who in 1727 made up the story of an angel-like pilgrim that predicted rain. Martínez lived near the village where the St. Francis painting sweated and was himself a prime example of the “hasty greed” that the Traíd pamphlet warned about.

Martínez told people that the pilgrim had announced a miracle for the next Ascension Day and

said that Martínez's crucifix was giving off blood.⁶⁵ What actually happened with this crucifix, he later told the Inquisition, is that "I would dip the holy crucifix in water or splash it with water, and put blood drawn from my finger on it."⁶⁶

Martínez did this four times as he led his sheep on the long return trip northward from winter pastures (once at a town near Casas de Benitez, itself probably on his route). When he did so, he acted out the symptoms of the crucifix and trembled or feigned pain as a sign that the crucifix was bleeding, like the English cleric penanced two hundred years before in London. The last time was in a village not far from the place where he lived; there his companions informed the parish priest, who confiscated the crucifix, saying the bleeding was a fraud, something that Martínez, who seems rather innocent, then freely admitted.

When Martínez reached his home village of Taravilla, the fame of his crucifix had preceded him, and the townspeople demanded to see it. Outraged that it had been taken away, the people and their priest went with Martínez to try and get the crucifix back. But when Martínez was alone with the two priests he again admitted his deception, and they would not return it.

Determined to obtain the miraculous Christ for their town, the people of Taravilla then wanted Martínez to appeal to the bishop of Cuenca, but as the

time for his miracle on Ascension Day was nearing, the shepherd came up with an alternative. From a street niche in the town of his birth he stole a stone image of Mary and stashed it on the hillside above Taravilla. On Ascension Day he told the priest the Virgin had appeared to him and revealed where her statue was hidden. By this time the priest knew Martínez was up to no good, but he and the sexton dutifully retrieved the image. When they brought it to the church, the townspeople rang the bells in celebration. They declared Martínez a saint, their own St. Francis, and tried to take snippets from his clothes as relics. People streamed in from the surrounding towns and chipped off stone from the hillside where the image had been found.

Hauled before the Inquisition, Martínez denied he had played these tricks to be treated as a saint or so people would think he had healing powers. He did it, he said, for pious reasons, in order to collect alms to redeem the Christian captives in North Africa, to have Masses said for those in mortal sin, and to move people to pray the Rosary. The Inquisition finally turned him over to the civil authorities, judging him simply lazy and wanting to eat and drink without working.⁶⁷

The skepticism among priests that Martínez encountered in 1728 was in keeping with that of the clergy in general by that time. The next year the learned

and hard-headed Benedictine Feijóo wrote, "How many sobs, or mysterious sweats in sacred images became known in various countries which had no more existence than that provided by mistaken eyesight or fanatical imagination! In the first years of this century the sweating of a Crucifix was proclaimed . . . as a symptom of the illness that Spain was then suffering, and the news spread to other countries as true, when it was just a fable."⁶⁸ He went on to praise the rectitude of the corregidor of Ágreda who in 1665 had the elderly servant of a priest whipped though the streets. The servant had faked the bleeding of a crucifix that had belonged to the mystic María de Ágreda and had been willed to the servant's master, the mystic's nephew. The fraud had provoked "the wonder of everyone, nobles and plebes. There were rogations, processions, vows, and alms." The fact that the crucifix had belonged to a mystic nun, popularly considered a saint, enhanced the plausibility of its animation, as with the pedigree of the crucifix in El Bonillo, said to have been brought from Rome.

As earlier at Ágreda, authorities by the mid-eighteenth century short-circuited many of the public activations, no matter how eager the public. In 1755 in the town of La Guardia in Andalusia when an image of Our Lady of the Rosary in the Dominican convent wept blood, the liquid in question was found to be

pomegranate juice.⁶⁹ In Palma de Mallorca in 1768, people gathered in front of the Jesuit church convinced that the stone image of Our Lady on the building's exterior had moved its hands from a joined to a crossed position in protest against the expulsion of the Jesuits. The royal government, backed by the bishop, responded firmly, dispersing the crowd and arresting those who had started the rumor.⁷⁰ The last great hurrah for image activation in Southern Europe before its revival in the twentieth century was the weeping and eye movements of multiple statues in the Papal States in 1795-1796 in advance of the Napoleonic invasion.⁷¹

In any case, most of the images whose cases we have looked at are still important for many inhabitants in their respective towns. People in Osa de la Vega, where the Veronica sweated in 1644, considered that the painting spared them from the great flu epidemic of 1914. When a Republican commission sought to remove the Christ of the Miracles from El Bonillo for

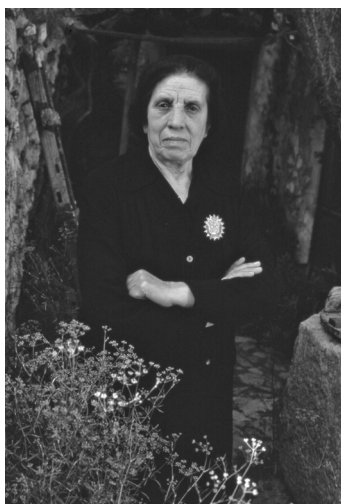


Fig. 20. Esperanza Aparicio Buendía wearing the medal presented to her and other women jailed in 1937 for their defense of the image of the Santo Cristo del Milagro of El Bonillo (Albacete). Photo: The author, October 24, 1976.

safekeeping in 1937, a group of women defended it, and they were jailed as a result. The Franco regime subsequently awarded them medals (*Fig. 20*). While in jail, two of them told me forty years later, they saw a cross in the sky, framed against the moon.⁷² During the Civil War, as images were burned throughout the Republican zone, revolutionaries in one village took the time to chip away every bit of a mural crucifix that had sweated in 1768 and had come to symbolize a power structure they had replaced. After the Civil War the mural was carefully repainted.⁷³

Several aspects of these events, not the least the characteristics of some of the liquids (non-evaporating, often perfumed) and the significance of many of the dates (Thursdays, Fridays, Easter Sunday, Transfiguration Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Ascension Thursday) point to what could be termed “intelligent design” in several of these events. One cannot rule out, for instance, the existence of a kind of pharmaceutical lore, circulating among the dispensaries of certain religious orders. The Augustinians, erstwhile keepers of the Christ of Burgos (reputed to sweat every Friday),⁷⁴ had a conspicuous presence in several cases.

But the whodunit question should not distract us from the central cultural fact of the eager receptiveness, the active collaboration in the certification of these events, and the promotion of these images by

the authorities and citizens of the towns involved. This receptiveness was rooted in the constant, urgent search for divine helpers on a corporate and personal level, and in the highly-tuned sense in Spain's city, town, and village states of being God's chosen place.

The identification of town as Jerusalem, through the erections of Calvaries and Stations of the Cross and the entire intense sequence of Holy Week ceremonies and processions already applied to virtually every nuclear settlement in Spain. These image activations dramatically recharged the metaphor. The images involved became proofs, relics, and trophies, demonstrations of the power of images in the face of local and international religious enemies, but especially demonstrations of God's vital residence in their particular place, as opposed to, say, the next town over.

Time and again we saw how the laypeople and clergy knew what to do in these situations, what questions to ask, what to look for. While the events were rare enough to provoke great excitement, they were part of the established cultural repertoire of early modern Catholic Europe. Although a few of the images that temporarily came to life may have done so with an initial advantage—because they were reputedly not made by humans, in the case of Veronicas, or were the replica of an image known to be powerful, in the case of the Christ of Burgos in Cabra del Santo Cristo⁷⁵—the vast

majority of those that did so were simple, workaday crucifixes or paintings, unremarkable and hitherto unremarked. That indeed was and is an important lesson of most of these events, that every image, in addition to representing the divine, could embody it.⁷⁶

It was not unusual for the devout to have a sense that their private devotional images were responding orally as well as visually to prayer.⁷⁷ From this perspective, the display of blood, sweat and tears on images was an extension into the public realm of a private two-way channel of devotional communication that was a free zone beyond the control of confessors and inquisitors. The care with which small crucifixes or Baby Jesuses were willed from one woman to another is an indication of the intensity of these devotions in the home or in the dressing room.⁷⁸ In this zone, of which we read quite uninhibited accounts in pious biographies, images may smile, nod, knock, blanch, glower, twist in anguish. But there is no implication or expectation that others may share these private experiences. The presence of divine liquid on a statue is qualitatively different because it is verifiable by others, and in the episodes here that started in the private sphere, the news passed immediately from home to street.

We have seen the rise from the early sixteenth century, the cresting in the 1640s and the surfeit and decline in the eighteenth century of the acceptance of

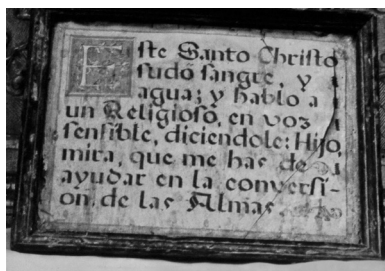
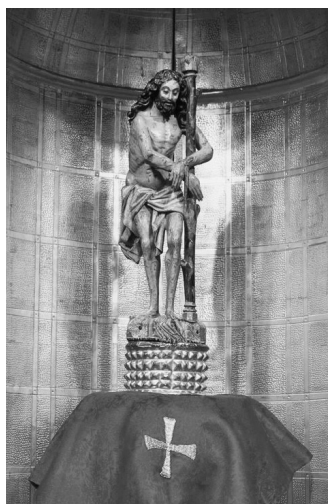


Fig. 22. Miracle board, c. 1630. Santuario-Monasterio de Nuestra Señora de Monlora, Luna (Zaragoza). Photo: The author.

Fig. 21. Christ at the Column, early sixteenth century. Polychromed wood. Santuario-Monasterio de Nuestra Señora de Monlora, Luna (Zaragoza), seen to sweat in 1629 and 1630. Courtesy of Hermandad de Ntra. Sra. de Monlora.

public blood, sweat and tear miracles by Church and civil authorities that became publicly known.

While by the eighteenth century the authorities were wary of new activations, the images certified as having sweated, wept and bled waited patiently, alive and well, for times to change and the clergy to be less rigorous. And along with these images, their approved miracle boards, their paintings, their miracle days on which their activation was recalled in sermons, so too waited the general idea of image animation for new public cycles.⁷⁹ (*Figs. 21-23.*)

In Spain one such cycle began in 1919, in the context of a Catholicism experienced as under siege from Republican, Socialist and anarchist unbelievers. The Christ of Agony in the parish church of Limpías in



Fig. 24. Main altar of the parish church of San Pedro, Limpías (Cantabria), with the image of the Christ of Limpías. Photo: Felipe Pereda, August 2010. By permission.

Fig. 23. The Virgin of the Miracle, patroness of Cocentaina (Alicante). Postcard, 1945, on the silver anniversary of the coronation, from a dentist in Cocentaina to student in Santiago de Compostela. “...you cannot imagine the hullabaloo in the town...”

Cantabria first showed signs of life during a Capuchin mission (*Fig. 24*). On the first day there was a sweat-like condensation on the image, but that only happened once, and the miracle people came to expect was movement in the eyes, mouth, face, and changes in complexion, as though the image was looking at people, responding to them, or, eventually, dying in the throes of agony (*Fig. 25*). Over the next few years a quarter of a million people went to see it, and about one in fifteen saw it come alive (*Fig. 26*). The diocese opened an investigation and concluded that the visions were subjective and the fruit of suggestion and artificial lighting, but never made a public pronouncement. Official pilgrimages led by bishops tailed off, and in the mid- to late-1920s pilgrimages were mainly from



Fig. 25. Postcard sampler, Limpias, c. 1919, of José Martínez.



Fig. 26. Pilgrimage group at Limpias, undated. Photo: José Martínez.

outside Spain, including biannual pilgrimages by Austrians and Hungarians. Many of the pilgrims stopped to visit the Habsburg imperial family in exile in the Spanish Basque Country. The Hungarians set up shrines to Limpias in Budapest and Lillafüred.⁸⁰



Fig. 27. The bleeding statues of Templemore, Ireland, 1921. Photo: W.D. Hogan. Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.

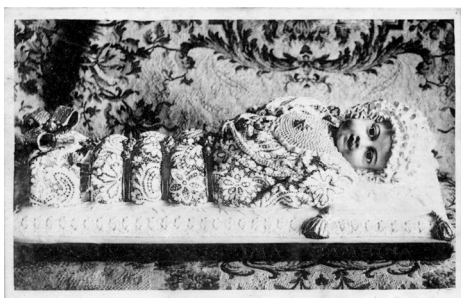
Other similar events preceded it, most immediately, an episode of a crucifix in Gandía in 1918, that seemed to bleed until the blood turned out to be paint, paint apparently applied by a teenage girl. And others followed *Limpías*: a series of crucifixes that seemed to move in Navarre in 1920, the news quashed by the bishop because they would damage the case for *Limpías* and open the faith to ridicule.⁸¹ As with the rain processions and apparitions, the tradition of animated statues was the subject of ridicule among Spanish Republicans and anticlericals, who attributed the events to the manipulation of the clergy and the gullibility of believers and considered it part of a system of domination.⁸²

In August 1921 in Templemore in Ireland, in the thick of guerrilla warfare against the British troops and just as the news of the *Limpías* crucifix was becoming known there, some images associated with a young man seemed to bleed (*Fig. 27*) and tens of thousands of pilgrims went to see them until after a couple of months the youth was discredited.⁸³

Fig. 28. Marie Mesmin and the oratory of the Santissima Bambina, Bordeaux. Postcard.



Fig. 29. The Santissima Bambina of Marie Mesmin. "Picture of the Statue that wept frequently in the presence of about one thousand witnesses in Bordeaux at number 13 July 30th Street from Dec. 19, 1911, to Jan. 20, 1913, when it was moved to the Oratory of Boulevard de Bouscat 26..." Postcard.



There were other episodes associated with small cults⁸⁴ like that of the lay mystic Marie Mesmin of Bordeaux (1867–1935). She had a Lourdes image that allegedly wept from 1907 until 1910, when it was confiscated by Church authorities. She replaced it with an Italian Baby Mary that wept from 1911 until 1913.⁸⁵ (*Figs. 28–29.*) Similarly a French parish priest, l'abbé Vachère de Grateloup, from 1911 until his death in 1921 had images that seemed to bleed and weep. These included successive pictures of the Sacred Heart as well as other images and consecrated hosts.



Fig. 31. Angelo and Antonina Jannuso with the Weeping Madonna of Siracusa, 1953. Photo: Maltese-Siracusa, all rights reserved.

Fig. 30. The bleeding Sacred Heart of Mirebeau-en-Poitou c. 1911. Recopied photo postcard for sale by Joaquín Sicart, Ezquioga, 1932.

These phenomena occurred in Mirebeau-en-Poitou, as well as on a visit in 1920 to Aix-la-Chapelle (*Fig. 30*). Vachère would also hear Christ speak, and during the war Christ predicted France's victory. The priest distributed miniature photographs, daubed with the images' blood, as talismans for soldiers.⁸⁶

But the only well-publicized and Church-certified episode of an image with liquid on it in twentieth-century Europe was the plaster plaque of the Immaculate Heart of Mary belonging to Antonina and Angelo Jannuso in Siracusa, Sicily (*Fig. 31*). For four days starting on August 29, 1953, the image gave off what seemed to be human tears,⁸⁷ first in the Jannuso bedroom, then in the police station, then again in the house, purportedly convincing Communists, Freemasons and Protestants. An initial commission including



Fig. 32. Franciscans relaying flowers, pictures, handkerchiefs and cotton to be touched to the image, Piazza Euripide. Photo: Walter Carone, *Paris Match*, Oct. 3, 1953, p. 53, all rights reserved.



Fig. 33. Stand selling cotton and photographs to be touched to the Madonna, Piazza Euripide, Siracusa, Photo: Walter Carone, *Paris Match*, Oct. 3, 1953, p. 53, all rights reserved.

a chemist, a medical doctor, priests and police officers examined the image and tasted and tested the tears, which seemed to be human. The image was moved to a niche outside on the street, and on September 19 escorted by the archbishop to the Piazza Euripide, where people continued to touch it with flowers, photographs, or cotton sold at the site, all potential relics for grace and healing.⁸⁸ (*Figs. 32–33.*) Dozens of cures ensued.

The joint declaration by Sicilian bishops on the “reality of the lacrimation” on December 12, 1953, at the start of the Marian year, encouraged a host of similar image activations across Europe. The long-distance distribution of blessed cotton was similar to that of Lourdes water. In Spain a shrine to the Siracusa weeping image was set up in Ciudad Real, and the priest there distributed pieces of cotton that that been touched to the Siracusa image (*Fig. 34*), while a



Fig. 34. Envelope containing Siracusa cotton relic distributed from Ciudad Real, Spain. "Cotton blessed and touched to the miraculous image of the Virgin of the Tears. Sent by the Archdiocesan Curia of Siracusa" [1950s?].

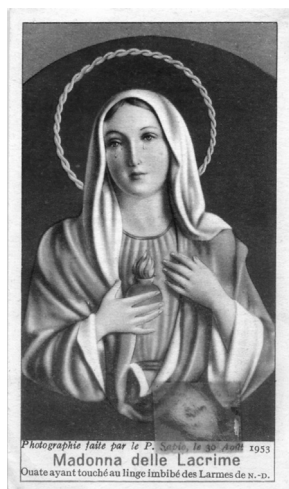


Fig. 35. Holy card with color photo taken at Siracusa Aug. 30, 1953, and "cotton that touched cloth soaked in the tears of Our Lady." Propagande Mariale Ciney, imprimerie Diocese of Namur, July 1, 1955.

priest in Belgium did so with holy cards with cotton relics that had been touched to cotton with the tears (Fig. 35). Photography, better communications, mass market photo journalism, radio and television, sped up and internationalized the news and the model, for which there was a ready and eager audience during the struggle between Catholics and Communist Parties across Europe.

In Spain three cases became known: an image of the Miraculous Mary on the main altar of the church of Entrecruces (La Coruña) that appeared to weep on eleven different days from February 11 to April 21,



Fig. 36. "The New Virgin of the Tears" detail, cover of *Sábado Gráfico* (Madrid), Oct. 24, 1959, with the article by Javier Querol, "The Mystery of Some Tears," about Villalba de la Sierra (Cuenca). All rights reserved.



Fig. 37. The bleeding hand of Saint Anne of Entrevaux, signed on back "Jean Salvadé, 1957". Postcard c. 1953–1954, Nice, Photomic. From www.delcampe.net.

1954; a similar incident with a Immaculate Heart of Mary in another Galician village in 1954-1955;⁸⁹ and a weeping lithograph of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in a village of Cuenca, Villalba de la Sierra, in September 1959 (Fig. 36).⁹⁰ All of the weeping ceased when the images were enclosed in locked urns or frames. In the Entrecruces case a diocesan commission of skeptical priests sent the tears for chemical analysis and found they were largely water.⁹¹

In France, another Francisco Martínez emerged when the café owner Jean Salvadé read of the Siracusa events and created his own autonomous Siracusa in the medieval tourist town of Entrevaux (Fig. 37). On November 29, 1953, Salvadé purchased an image of St. Anne teaching the child Mary to read. He broke off and reglued one of St. Anne's fingers, and during a poker game on December 26 put the image next to



Fig. 38. "Sainte-Anne d'Entrevaux" Postcard, c. 1953–54, signed on back "Jean Salvadé, 1957". His signature was crossed out and the card used for an entry to a contest of *La Vie Catholique Illustrée*, Paris. Nice, Photomic.



Fig. 39. "Entrevaux, Ste Anne Miraculeuse. Gisèle AUBERT et sa mère, janvier 1954." Snapshot 6.5x11.3. Photographer unknown.

him for good luck. When he lost the hand he was playing he kicked the image over, snapping off the finger. On December 28, he pricked his own finger, bloodied the broken hand of the image, then pretended to discover the miracle, with the idea that the image was bleeding because of his blasphemy (*Fig. 38*).

The chain of events that followed was somewhat similar to that in early modern Spain, except that the French clergy wanted nothing to do with it.⁹² As townspeople flocked in (*Fig. 39*), Salvadé got the local photographer to document the bleeding, the doctor to examine it (he sent a blood sample to the pharmacist in



Fig. 40. "The conclusion of Dr. Monner and the pharmacist Laik was definite: the blood of the Virgin was human blood." From Salvadé confession series, *France-Dimanche*, Feb. 16, 1961, p. 8, all rights reserved.



Fig. 41. "The last pilgrimage of schoolchildren before the departure of Saint Anne." *Paris Match*, Dec. 25, 1954, p. 65, all rights reserved.

a nearby town who certified it was human) (Fig. 40) and a radiologist from Nice to come and make an X-ray of the statue to show there was no hidden mechanism.⁹³ Reporters, photographers and newsreel cameramen came from Paris, Dublin, and the United States,⁹⁴ and Salvadé cultivated an ascetic persona, modeled on Gandhi, turning his eyes heavenward when faced with hard questions. He left plates out for contributions and sold signed postcards of the image and the hand, and soon miracles began to occur among the pilgrims who came to be healed by Salvadé's touch. As at Siracusa, a film crew came to document the story (Fig. 41).

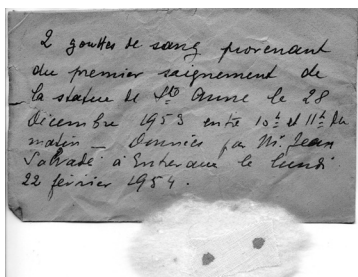


Fig. 42. Envelope and relic. "Two drops of blood from the first bleeding of the statue of Ste. Anne on Dec. 28, 1953 between 10 and 11 o'clock in the morning. Given by M. Jean Salvadé à Entrevaux on Monday, February 22, 1954." In a celluloid holder with a postcard of the image signed by Jean Salvadé.



Fig 43. "I made the Virgin's statue bleed." Headline, *France-Dimanche*, Feb. 9, 1961, p. 8, all rights reserved.

Also as at Siracusa, Salvadé distributed pieces of cotton with the blood, of which of course he had an abundant supply (Fig. 42). When local interest waned, he joined forces with a like-minded Florentine and exhibited the statue in Paris. There Salvadé could escape the obligations of a holy man and could live a life of ease.

The film was shown in 1957 to little success, and the Cardinal-Archbishop of Paris warned people against it. The Florentine absconded with the money of wealthy believers. And in 1958 Salvadé brought the image back

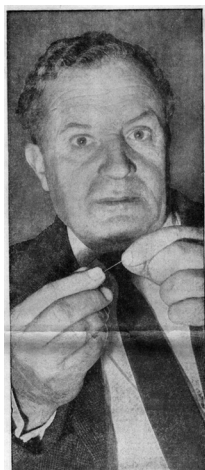
to Entrevaux, where his supporters were loyal but few in number. He finally sold the story of how he had invented the whole enterprise (and how he was just as surprised as anybody by the miracles) to the sensationalist newspaper *France-Dimanche* (Fig. 43), which published it in five full-page episodes in February 1961 (Fig. 44).⁹⁵ The police promptly intervened, and in 1962 Salvadé

was condemned to thirteen months in prison.⁹⁶

When, decades later, a police-inspector-turned journalist interviewed him in an old age home, Salvadé reneged, saying the bleeding was genuine and he had confessed just for the money,⁹⁷ leading us to the eternal conundrum, applicable to Francisco Martínez as well, of just when a fibber is telling the truth.

There have continued to be news stories about liquid on images in Spain and Southern Europe, and worldwide in Orthodox and Coptic churches and homes. There was a related spate in Ireland on the heels of Medjugorje enthusiasm, from February 1985 to the fall of 1986 (but without liquid: the statues, mostly those of Mary in outdoor Lourdes grottos erected in 1954, were simply seen to move, as at Limpias) and in the 1990s, in Italy, with the most famous instance in Civitavecchia, where the bleeding Madonna had been purchased at Medjugorje by the parish priest, a Spaniard, and given to the local prayer group.⁹⁸

These manifestations no longer serve as sympathetic consolation for towns in times of drought or other travails, in part because towns are no longer sufficiently homogenous arenas for religious interpreta-



Je me suis d'abord piqué le doigt
« AVEC CETTE ÉPINGLE. AVOUE AUJOURD'HUI
JEAN SALVADÉ (CI-DESSUS), JE NE POUVAIS PROFONDEMENT LE DOIGT : MON SANG COULA ET J'EN ENQUIS LA CASSURE DE L'INDEX DE LA STATUE. »

Fig. 44. "First I pricked my finger." *France-Dimanche*, Feb. 9, 1961, p. 8, all rights reserved.



Fig. 45. Sign in street stand, Siracusa. "The only photograph included in the Acts of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal." Detail. Photo: Walter Carone, *Paris Match*, Oct. 3, 1953, p. 53, detail, all rights reserved.

tion, and in part because travails no longer have credibly local causes. If a manifestation receives publicity the meaning attributed to it quickly transcends the local community, drawn out by specialized interpreters into a national or world-wide interpretive etiology, often involving the end times.⁹⁹ Of course, we are less likely to know about events that have not received or carefully side-stepped publicity and remained local.

A critical change from the early modern episodes is that photography, film and video have become the key means of demonstrating reality, replacing in the popular mind sworn testimony (*Fig. 45*). The depictions of these miracles in seventeenth-century Spain were highly controlled and permitted only after episcopal approval. In the twentieth century, photographs and films became evidence in the deliberative process both for Church authorities and for public opinion.¹⁰⁰

The nature of the substance has changed along with methods for its analysis. In several early modern cases, the efforts of artists, pharmacists and doctors were to eliminate the possibility that it was a human substance or a known perfume or preparation, with the underlying idea, shared with ancient Greek religion, that it was some kind of ichor, the fluid in the gods' veins. Perhaps because of refined methods for chemical analysis, and perhaps with a more human and less hieratic idea of the divinity, the nineteenth- and twentieth-century Catholic cases emphasize and accept as positive evidence that the blood, sweat or tears is human (or as negative evidence that the blood is animal). But the advent of DNA forensics by the end of the 1980s has added a serious complication to the likes of Francisco Martínez and Jean Salvadé. In Civitavecchia, when the blood on the Madonna turned out to have male DNA (*Mary as Father?*) and the image's owner refused to let his blood be tested, the events lost whatever remained of their credibility.¹⁰¹

What has not changed much is the personal use to which the divine liquids are put (*Fig. 46*). The liquid

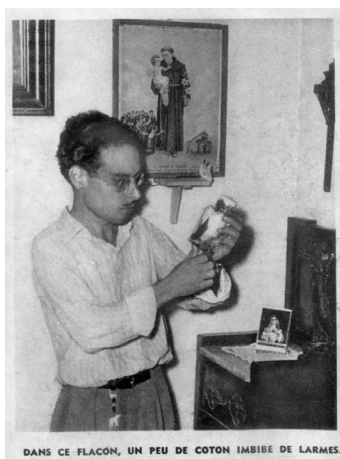


Fig. 46. A bottle of cotton soaked in tears, Siracusa. *Paris Match*, Sept. 26, 1953, p. 26, all rights reserved.

is tasted, if no longer applied to the eye. The relic on cotton is touched to the wound and carried for protection. This universal, never-ending demand for the divine touch is more than enough to make it likely that images exude in the future, although the possibility of official certification has dramatically declined. The idea of a new beacon for healing and consolation in the constellation of grace remains, however truncated most of the recent attempts have been to achieve it through animated images. Devotees of St. Anne of Entrevaux swear that they saw the image move and embrace them.

And surely the idea of verisimilitude is so built into the notion of representation that from the dawn of time not just any religious image, but, as with Pygmalion, any image at all of a living being has built into it the idea, the prospect of animation.¹⁰² The demand for animation itself from photograph to animated sequence, to moving pictures, to moving pictures with sound and color, to 3D and holograms exemplifies this principle. The communication of gods through their images, sharing their pain, their wounds, their sorrow and their travails through blood, sweat and tears, takes the process one step farther, crossing the cognitive, emotional, and physiological boundaries between human and supernatural beings.

Chapter 3

Presence, Absence and the Supernatural in Postcard and Family Photographs, Europe 1895–1920¹

“Painting possesses a truly divine power in that not only does it make the absent present (as they say of friendship), but it also represents the dead to the living many centuries later, so they are recognized by spectators with pleasure and deep admiration for the artist.”

Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, 1435²

Illustrating the two previous chapters about visits by pilgrim strangers and images that seemed to come alive were statues, paintings, engravings, and photographs. This chapter deals with the passage of art to photography in the representation of visions. Its brief text is a guide to what is essentially a visual argument for the transposition of medieval and early modern representations of the relations between humans and the divine to the art of photography, and the profound change in the nature of the self that photography facilitated. The chapter is arranged in pools of images connected by introductions.

When preparing these essays, I participated in a seminar on collecting. The fundamental act in collecting, it was pointed out, is the decision to include and exclude—the assignment of value to some things and not to others,³ thereby establishing a kind of membrane between things rejected and things accorded added value and special status.⁴ One participant cited Joan Kron: “By being part of a collection each piece is transformed from its original function of toy, icon, bowl, picture, whatever, into an object with new meaning—a member of an assemblage that is greater than the sum of its parts.”⁵

All of these essays involved choices of inclusion and exclusion, but the procedures differed. The first chapter grew organically and somewhat surprisingly from the story of Toribia del Val. An examination of the immediate context and antecedents and successors found the notion of the mysterious wayfarer to be like an unusual kind of mushroom. Fed by the rains of catechism, the sunshine of iconography, and seasonal showers of pilgrims, it occasionally emerged in visions or the stories of visions of angels or Christ.

The second is based on documented episodes of activation I had collected over four decades. Here inclusion was relatively simple: those instances of liquids on images which had a public impact, with reflections on why they had impact, and how they changed over

time. The mushroom in question was less rare and easier to find, and, apparently for systematic reasons, widely consumed in certain places and periods.

Whereas the first two chapters involved collecting everything or the more salient items in a class, for this last one, given a field of millions of postcards and photographic images between 1895 and 1920, there was no way to establish a population or even a taxonomy. Out of the seemingly limitless abundance of images available in shops, flea markets, and then online, certain ones attracted me more than others, this one yes, those no—an experience common to all shoppers. The reasons, while undeniably instinctual and aesthetic, also seemed to be thematic in a manner of which I was only partly unaware, aside from the general idea of depiction of the invisible. Over time, ideas and analogies became clearer and the choices more compelling, leading to “an assemblage that seemed to be greater than the sum of its parts.” The result is a path of meaning necessarily personal, one way of regarding the impact of the great revolution of photography on visions, self-awareness, and vision itself.

For photography (and subsequently moving pictures) shouldered its way into the discernment process for visions, with pictures and films cited as evidence for and against the activation of statues. As photography took hold on the imagination and became an

anchor for visual memory, its conventions and its iconography in turn affected what people experienced.

For any period in history we cannot fully understand what happened in visions without knowing the visual “field,” the common repertory, of “invisibles.” The years from 1895 to 1920, because of the fad for picture postcards, comprise a special period for the consolidation of a visible field that now is exceptionally accessible.

Fanning out from Berlin and Vienna, photo, photo/art, and art postcards spread a craze of images from great cities to remote villages. Millions of cards circulated, many of them in numbered sets, and many consumers sent each other, one by one, complete sets, commenting in their messages on their favorites.⁶ My grandfather’s cousin, a single man in New York City, sent his niece, a child in Lynchburg, Virginia, a postcard every day in the years around 1900. It was an affordable and democratic craze, in which masters and servants separately participated, gathering the cards in albums and boxes. The numbers are staggering. Collections and collectors continue a century later with stores, fairs, and websites to supply them. For Western Europe the most important website is currently Delcampe.com, based in Belgium, which had at the time of this writing over 27,000,000 postcards on offer, roughly half of them from the first three decades

of the twentieth century. An equivalent Spanish site, TodoColección, offers 1,150,000 postcards.⁷ These websites also offer personal and family photographs, many from the same period made on postcard stock so they could be mailed.

Immense searchable archives such as these provide a window on the imagination of the early twentieth century, particularly as expressed through the lens of the camera. Through them one can get to see how some of the invisible members of Western European society were made visible.

Visions Depicted

Photography brought an immediacy to the depiction of visions, but at the same time presented a basic problem, one that has always been present for people seeing others have visions: by definition one cannot see what only seers see (*Fig. 47*).

For documentary photos of visionaries, the proof and the attraction of the photos, like that of many mystical paintings and sculptures of the baroque period, was the transformation of the seer's faces and their bodies by what they saw looking upwards (*Fig. 48*). The artistic conventions involved in pose and gesture were absorbed by both seer and photographer. We saw how Francisco Martínez described his imagined pilgrim angel with upturned eyes and Jean Salvadé learned to turn his eyes upwards and cross his hands on his chest when faced with awkward questions (such as the one put by an Irish reporter: "Have you had your first communion?"). Seers at the apparition site of Ezquioga, in the Spanish Basque country (1931–1934), were told that rolled-back eyes were a sign of a true vision, and the pious photographers who depicted them waited to click, cropped to isolate and selected to print poses like those of visionaries in baroque art. (*Figs. 49–50*.) At Ezquioga and elsewhere, seers whose poses were awkward or unartistic were not photographed at

all, or only by skeptical photojournalists.⁸ In any case, the visionaries themselves were the spectacle people came to see, not what the visionaries were seeing, and in photos the faces in vision tend to be pointed up by the intent gaze of onlookers.

But however selective the photographers, the transformation of seers during visions was not terribly different from experimental subjects in vision pose, as in photos by Duchenne de Boulogne in 1862,⁹ seers when they were not having visions, as in 1864 studio portraits of Bernadette,¹⁰ studio models in prayer for the postcard trade (*Fig. 51*), ordinary people posing in prayer like this Spanish family by a household altar (*Fig. 52*), or any well-lit faces looking intently upward like this Belgian magazine cover from 1933 (*Fig. 53*).

And in any case, people had become accustomed to photographs as the measure of reality, but, as in real life, the invisibles were not in the picture.

Artists, of course, could depict the seer and the seen. Painting, observed Alberti in the fifteenth century, “contributed considerably to the piety that binds us to the gods.”¹¹ In late medieval and early modern painting, as the Romanian art historian Victor Stoi-chita has shown, the “vision” was often separated from the real by height, by angle of displacement, and mandorlas or clouds.¹² (*Figs. 54–55.*)

But this option, while it continued with the old schema in drawing, painting, exvotos, prints and postcards into the age of photography, had diminished authority compared to the scientific power of the photograph (*Figs. 56–63*). So other solutions were sought that could capture the story of apparitions succinctly and convincingly.

At La Salette postcards were sold combining photographs and art that depicted the visions and mapped their location. Photo postcards also showed the regular retelling of the vision events at the different locations. You see the pilgrims at the vision place hearing the apparition story, but you are looking at them as they look at the priests telling the story or the statues depicting it, and neither you nor they are seeing the Virgin Mary herself.

One way to make the art cards more dramatic, in keeping with the older technique of translucent painting and the effect of lantern slides, was translucent postcards that when held up to light could show the invisible. Developed first as souvenirs of World Expositions to depict day and night scenes, Spanish card publishers refined this technique to depict apparitions of the Virgin at Montserrat and Ezquioga (*Figs. 64–67*).

A more common solution was to use actors representing the seers and the seen, posed in positions al-

ready recognizable from conventional representations by artists (*Fig. 68*). We see these scenes as well on postcards from theatrical representations, especially from outdoor summer stages. And very early, film, shown as a regular option of the pilgrimage experience at Lourdes, became the most dramatic way to witness the vision experience. The reproduction of vision grottos with images placed in seen positions meant that in some way, almost everywhere in the Catholic world, people could physically place themselves in the position of Bernadette and could become part of the picture figuratively (at times literally) (*Fig. 69*).

For France the height of the postcard craze coincided not only with the popularity of Lourdes, but also with the national cult of Jeanne d'Arc and an enthusiastic campaign that culminated in her beatification in 1909 and her canonization in 1920 hard on the heels of the victory in World War I. The scene in Domrémy in which Jeanne heard the voices of saints and angels giving her her mission to reconquer France from the English (one that deeply resonated with the occupation of Alsace and Lorraine by Germany since the war of 1870) is a paradigm of the photographic representation of visions (or in this case, auditions). One way that the scene was represented in art and by actors was simply with a listening figure. But more commonly the supernaturals, as in paintings, were

drawn in or acted out, whether in the studio, in tableaux onstage or in outdoor pageants.¹³ (*Figs. 70–74.*)



SŒUR JOSEFA MENENDEZ
Religieuse coadjutrice de la Société du Sacré-Cœur
 1890-1923

« Je te veux apôtre de ma Bonté et de ma Miséricorde
 Il y a tant d'âmes qui ne connaissent pas la Bonté
 de mon Cœur!..
 Mon unique désir est que ces âmes que J'aime tant, se
 jettent et se perdent dans l'abîme sans fond de mon Cœur.
 ...Aide-Moi dans cette Œuvre d'Amour! »

Repr. interdite.

(NOTRE-SEIGNEUR à Sœur JOSEFA.)

*Fig. 47. Josefa Menéndez, c. 1930. Photographic holy card,
 Montpellier, Maison du Sacré-Cœur.*



*Fig. 48. José de Ribera, St. Mary the Egyptian, 1651.
Museo Civico Gaetano Filangeri, Naples.*

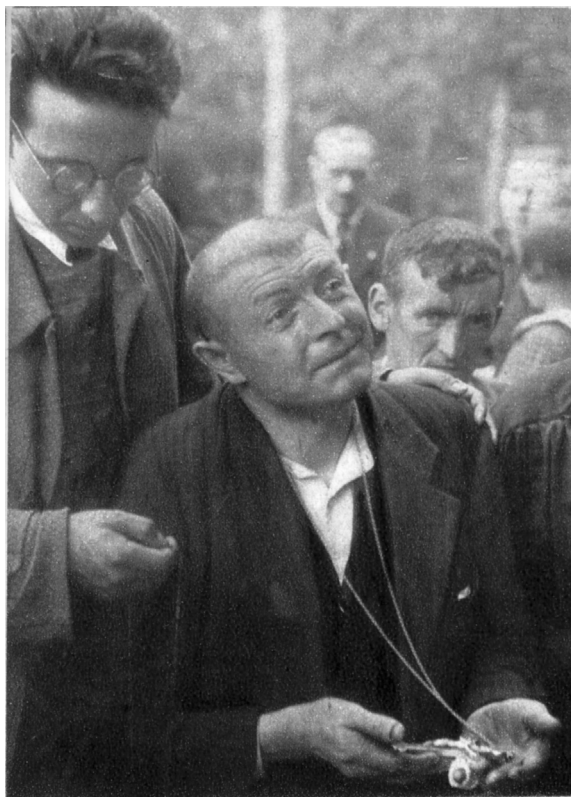


Fig. 49. José Garmendia, Ezquioga, 1932-1933. Photo: Raymond de Rigné, from VU (Paris), Aug. 30, 1933. All rights reserved.



Fig. 50. Marcelina Mendivil "in vision," Ezquioga, May, 1933. Photo: Raymond de Rigné, in *Une Nouvelle Affaire Jeanne d'Arc* (Orléans: La Librairie Centrale, 1933), Fig. 21. All rights reserved.



Fig. 51. Girl in prayer. Postcard from woman in Kazubazua (Que.) to woman in Buckingham (Que.), Nov. 17, 1909, with thanks for postcard. Publisher unknown.



Fig. 52. Family in prayer, c. 1920, Spain.



Fig. 53. Cover, *Soirées*, Brussels, Oct. 3, 1933.



Fig. 54. Raphael, *Transfiguration*, Vatican Museum.
Color postcard, before 1905. Rome, Ernesto Richter 57.



*Fig. 55. Murillo, *San Bernardo*, Museo del Prado 978.
Sepia Phototype Postcard, after 1905. Madrid, Fototipia Hauser y Menet.*



Fig. 56. Exvoto, shrine of Na. Sra. del Milacre, Riner (Lleida). Photo: the author.



Fig. 57. Exvoto, Nra. Sra. del Remei, Alcanar (Tar). Photo: the author.



*Fig. 58. Apparition, Na. Sra. de Agres (Alicante).
Lithograph holy card. Valencia, Lit. S. Durá.*



Fig. 59. Apparition of Sacred Heart at Paray-le-Monial. Sent within Paris, March 26, 1915. "My dear Emilie. At the Sacred Heart we thought about and prayed for you—your cousin and cousin." France, J. H.

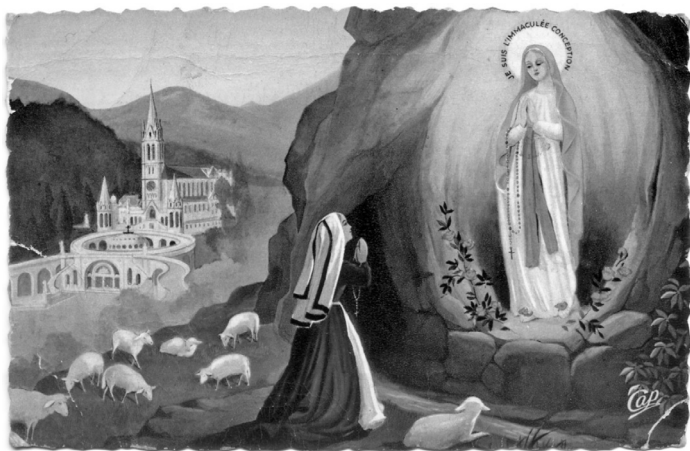


Fig. 60. Apparition. Lourdes. Postcard, 1950s. Paris, Cie des Arts Photomécaniques.



Fig. 61. Apparition. Beauraing, c. 1933. Vendu au profit des Missions / Verkocht ten voordeele der Missiën (Sold for the benefit of Missions).

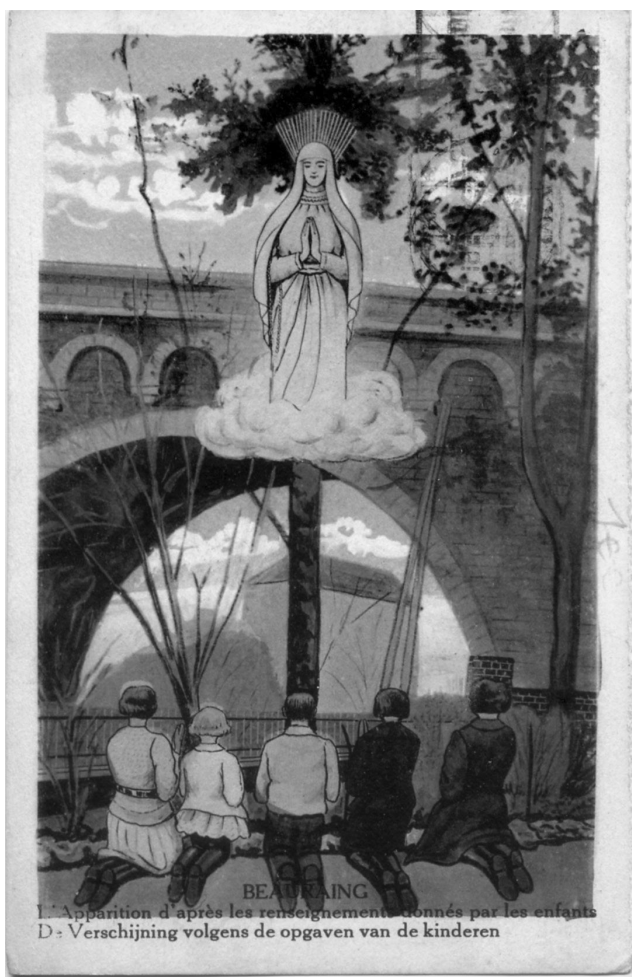


Fig. 62. Apparition, Beauraing. Sent to Mlles in Louvain, Oct. 7, 1933.
Liège, J. Mat, Phototypie Liègoise.



Fig. 63. "Pius XII contemplates the miracle of the sun of Fatima."
 Calendar illustration, 1960.
 ["visions in Vatican gardens Oct. 30 and 31 and Nov. 1 and 8, 1950"].
 Pamplona, Almanaque Apostolado de Fatima.

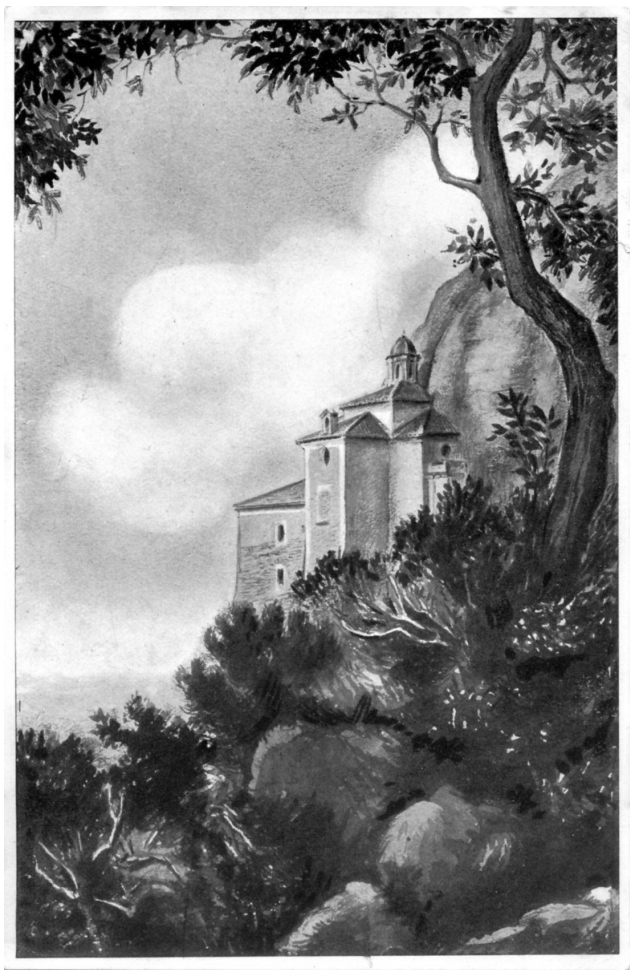


Fig. 64. Montserrat, the apparition cave [c. 1929].
Barcelona, Imp. M. Tasis.



Fig. 65. Montserrat, the apparition cave (backlit).
Barcelona, Imp. M. Tasis.

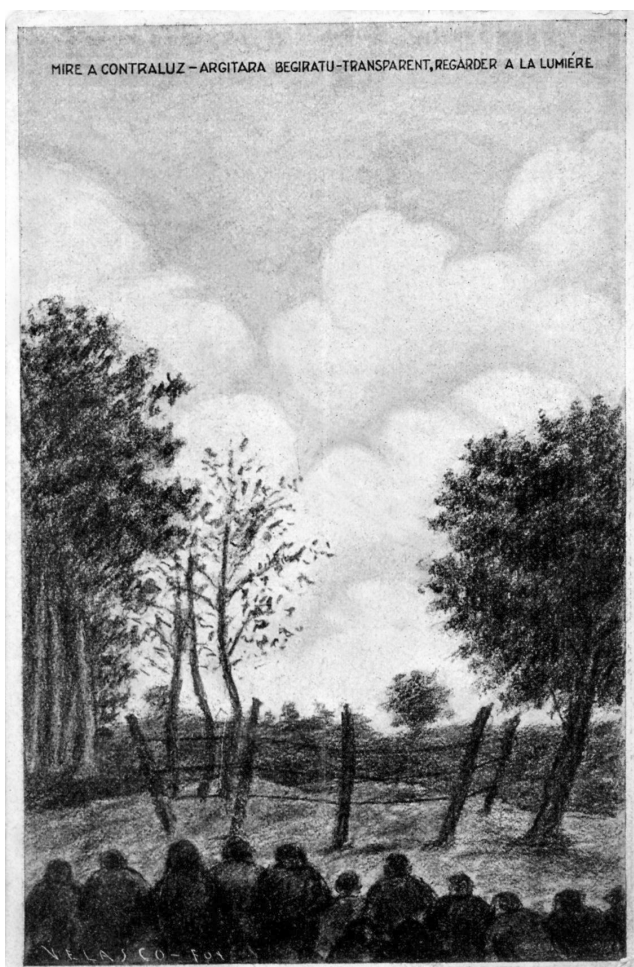


Fig. 66. Apparition of the Virgin at Ezquioga.
San Sebastián, Imp. Martín y Mena [1931].

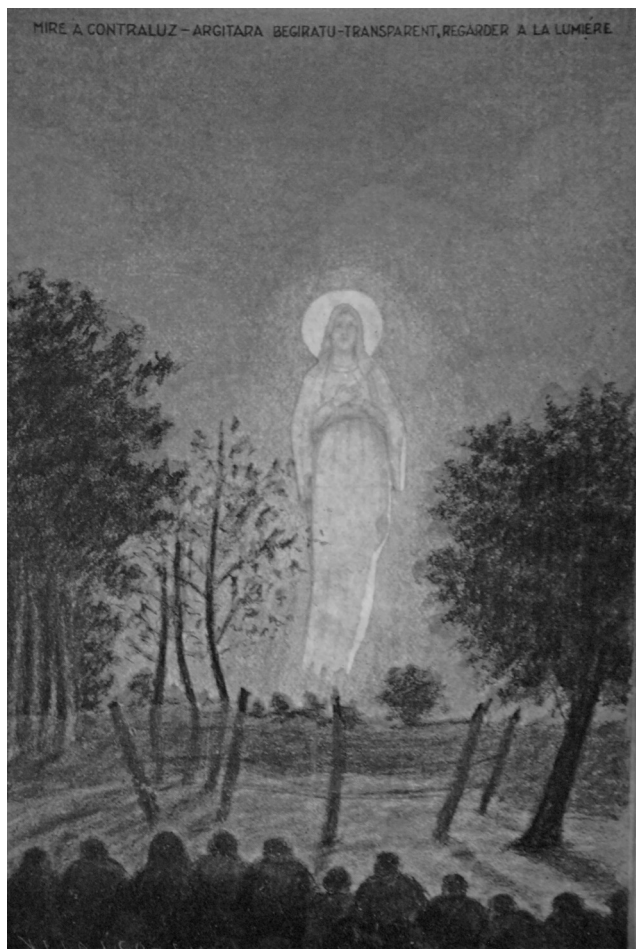


Fig. 67. Apparition of the Virgin at Ezquioga (backlit).
San Sebastián, Imp. Martín y Mena [1931].



Fig. 68. Lourdes studio card, sent from son in Barcelona to father working in Lleida, March 2, 1907. France, D.T. Edit.



Regnault, photo — Orléans.

Reproduction interdite.

Catéchistes Missionnaires de Marie Immaculée - Kumbakonam (Hindoustan)
La Prière à la Grotte de N.-D. de Lourdes.

Fig. 69. Children pray at the Lourdes grotto of Kumbakorum, India.
Postcard from Montjoy to Paris, Aug. 15, 1937. Orléans, Regnault Photo.



Fig. 70. "Jeanne d'Arc hearing her voices."

Postcard, sent to Mlle in Montluçon, June 21, 1903. Nancy, Bergeret.



Fig. 71. Jeanne d'Arc with sheep hearing her voices. Postcard sent within St. Méard de Gurçon (Dordogne) to Mlle., Sept. 17, 1909. France, BF [pansy] 474.



Fig. 72. "Jeanne hears the divine voices."
Postcard mailed from Paris, June 21, 1910. France, AF.



Fig. 73. Jeanne d'Arc outdoor pageant. Postcard, Bellême (Orne), Edition Bourgneuf-Fouquet.

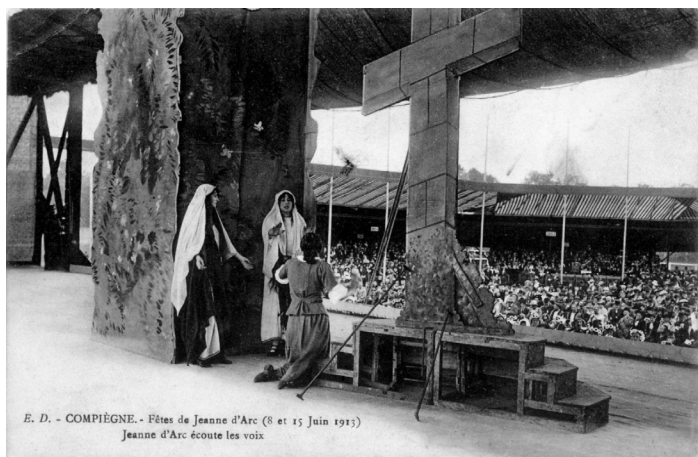


Fig. 74. Jeanne d'Arc pageant, Compiègne, June 8 and 15, 1913. Postcard, France, E. D.

Connecting with the Absent and the Supernaturals

Composite images, whether by photomontage, multiple exposure, sandwiched negatives, or other techniques, provided other solutions to the depiction of visions.¹⁴ Since the earliest days of their craft, photographers had experimented with combinations.¹⁵ The postcard trade encouraged the notion of absence combined with fondness, and combining images was a good way to picture the virtual reunion created by the card when sent. The period of 1895 to the end of World War I, which included massive migration and then the separation of soldiers from families, was its heyday (*Figs. 75–81*). The absence involved could also be the absent dead (*Figs. 82–84*). Spiritualist photographers from the 1860s on used photomontage to capture the visits of the dead to loved ones (*Fig. 85*).

The combination of images was quickly put to use as a way to simulate visions in which the seer and the seen could be depicted together. As early as 1864, the photographer Dufour experimented with combining a photo of Bernadette kneeling in prayer, taken in a Tarbes studio, with the Lourdes grotto that had a statue of the Virgin she was supposedly seeing, although he had her somewhat off the ground and facing the wrong way.¹⁶ (*Fig. 86.*)

The combination of supernaturals and humans, whether through a mixture of photos and art, or with actors combined through multiple exposure or photomontage, or using painted backdrops, or groups of actors in real photos, is a constant in the decade before World War I (*Figs. 87–88*). Ghosts, spirits and dreams figured in commercial photographs and lantern slide shows by the 1850s, depicted around the living by use of multiple exposure or multiple negatives.¹⁷ (*Figs. 89–90*.) Beings like these, not just the family dead, also turn up in spirit photographs and early twentieth-century commercial postcards (*Figs. 91–92*). We see angels as guardians, especially with children, and in photo portraits, children dressed as angels (*Figs. 93–97*). Saint Nicolas/Père Noël appears especially with children; he is a more familiar figure who even poses for the camera and at times looks a lot like grandfather (*Figs. 98–101*).

This last, *laïque* version gives an inkling of the two world-views in struggle in this period, a struggle reflected in postcards. Apparitions, whether of the Sacred Heart to a nun at Paray-le-Monial, or to the children of La Salette or Bernadette at Lourdes, were for many Catholics signs for France as a nation. At the same time French secularists, followed by their peers in other Southern European nations, were militantly anti-Catholic. In the postcards we thus find

allegorical figures for the nation, always a woman, that variously are conceived as Catholic (whether being trussed by Freemasons, or protected by Christ, or blessed by the Pope), semi-Catholic, or completely non-Catholic (*Figs. 102–105*). A rare anarchist card from 1909, at the death of the Catalan-Spanish educator Francisco Ferrer, presents an entirely different woman, freed from clerical chains, proud of body, with no emblem of national identity (*Fig. 106*).



Fig. 75. "Thought knows no distance." From woman in Bessan (Hérault) to sister, in Faugères, March 1905. "Tell me if you got the basket..." Nancy, Bergeret.

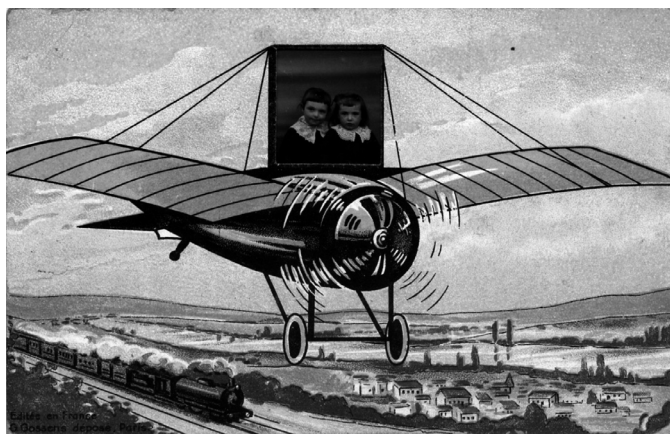


Fig. 76. Sisters aloft. From Madeleine and Lucienne Bardorell to Mlle Ernestine Doncourt in America, "Bonne et heureuse Année." France, printed frame, Champigny (Seine), G. Gossens.



Fig. 77. From woman, in Spanish, "Your friend wishes you a happy saint's day." Bought in Barcelona. Berlin, Rotophot 2873/1.



Fig. 78. Sent within Budapest from Laci to Tóth Sárika (“Aranyos Pipikém!” [My little darling!]) April 18, 1912. Vienna, OPG 3411/12.



Fig. 79. Written in French from woman to lover. Paris, Rex 475.



Fig. 80. "From afar he knows how to thrill me with the caress of a kiss." Sent with New Year greetings to Mlle. in Vitré, Jan. 3, 1915. Paris, Rex 4639.



*Fig. 81. "Dream." Sent from Jeanne to Mlle in Anduze (Gard).
"Souhais sincères: Un gentil mari." Berlin, Georg Gerlach Co. 1416/2.*

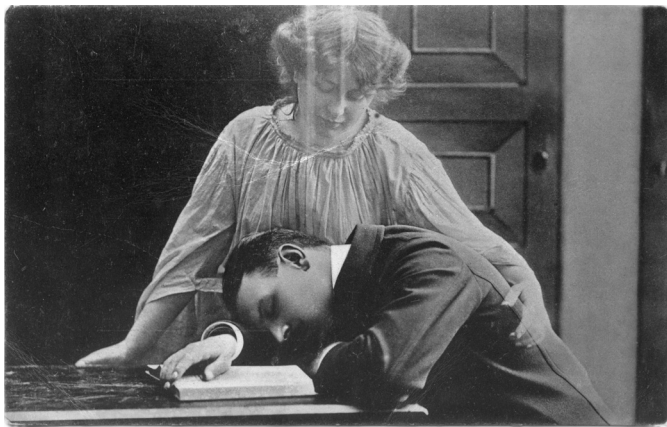


Fig. 82. Hamburg, Fritz Korf, EFFKA Serie 233, No. 1. Postcard bought from southern Spain.



Fig. 83. Written in Portuguese from aunt and uncle to nephew and niece, April 25, 1911, hoping niece gets better. Rotophot, Berlin 5015/16.



Fig. 85. Mrs. R. Foulds, of Sheffield, “with psychic likeness of her mother, obtained under good test conditions,” by William Hope, 1920, in Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Case for Spirit Photography* (New York: Doran, 1923), Fig. 24.



Fig. 86. Composite photograph of Bernadette in a studio in Tarbes and grotto at Lourdes, Oct. 1864 [in Vircondelet h/t 6, Laurentin 74].
Tarbes, Paul Dufour. © BNF



Fig. 87. Girl praying to Murillo, *Inmaculada*. From woman in Barcelona to woman in Blanes, July 4, 1914. Berlin, NPG 3508.



Fig. 88. "You who can read my heart, have pity on my sorrow." From woman to "Mon cher aimé," Feb. 14, 1915: "...I hope when I get home this evening I will find news from you..." Paris, Rex 4110.

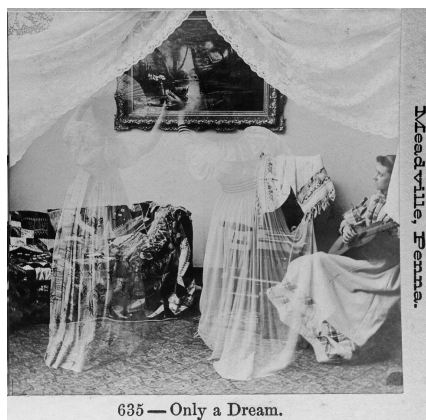
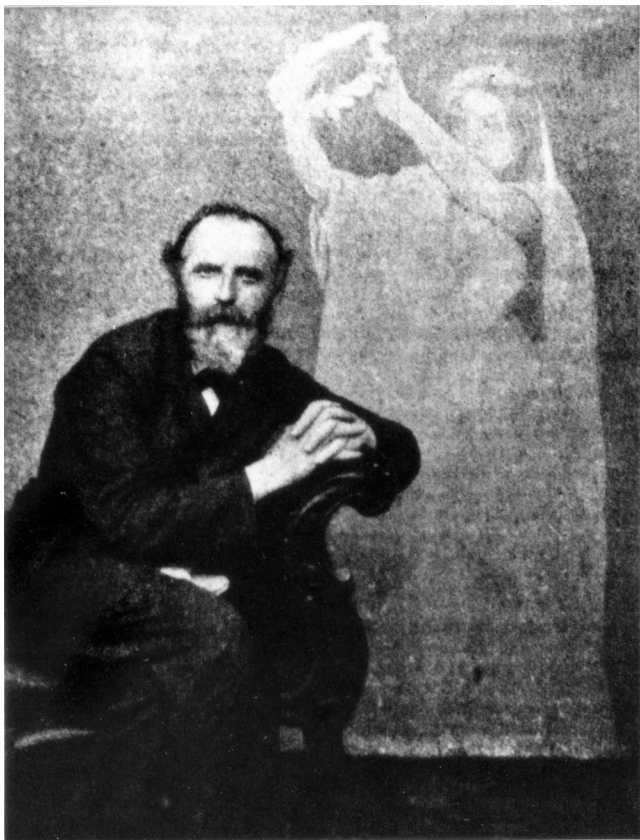


Fig. 89. "Only a Dream," stereoscopic photograph of dancers with fans. Meadville, Penna, Keystone View Company 635. Copyright 1894 by B. L. Singley.



Fig. 90. "Be the Howly St. Patrick, there's Mickie's Ghost!" stereoscopic photograph of ghost at wake. New York, N. Y., Strohmeyer and Wyman, copyright 1894.



*Fig. 91. The journalist W.T. Stead with spirit, 1891. From Gettings, *Ghosts in Photographs* (1978). Photographer unknown.*



Fig. 92. Pianist and spirit holding laurel crown. From Villefranche-sur-Saône to Mlle. in Gap, May 8, 1906. Berlin, Rotophot S. 428-4976.



Fig. 93. Girl with guardian angel. From woman in Hérissou (Allier) to girl in Montluçon (Allier), Dec. 15, 1912. Paris, Croissant 3877.



Fig. 94. Bad girl with weeping guardian angel. From Autignac (Hérault) to daughter in Béziers, 1903. Paris, Neurdein.



Fig. 95. Guardian angel by toddlers in bed. Sent within Catalonia to Srta Montserrat Julià from cousins Juana and Rosa Font, April 29, 1896. Rotophot, Berlin S-511-5444.



Fig. 96. Child angels around toddler in manger. Vienna, H.H.I.W. Serie 916, after 1905.



Fig. 97. First Mass priest (blessed by painted Christ) with child angels, late nineteenth-century cabinet card 10.2x14.9. Masnou (Barcelona), E. Sagristá.

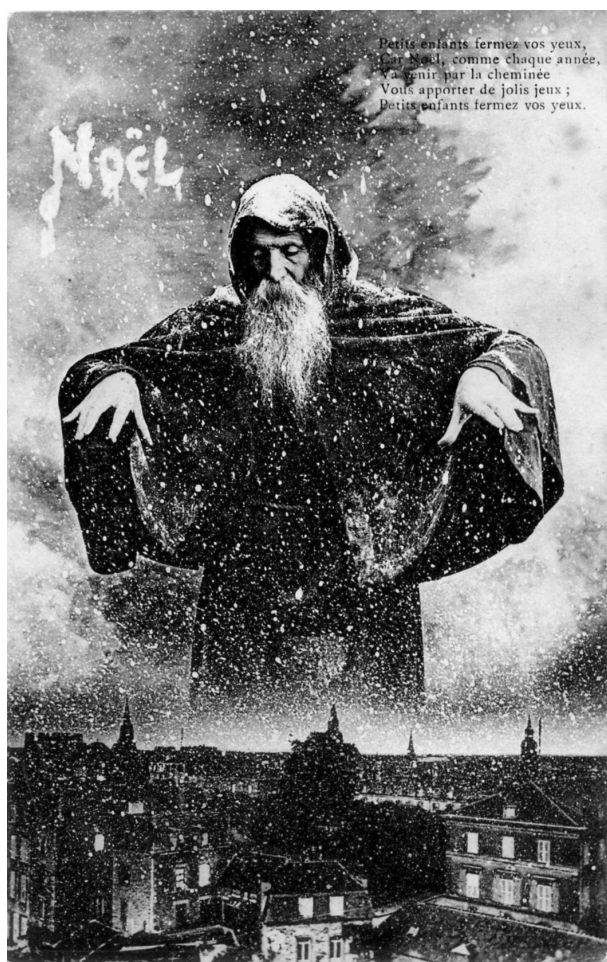


Fig. 98. Father Christmas above city puts children to sleep.
Nancy, Bergeret, after 1905.



Fig. 99. St. Nicolas approaches children asleep in crib. Sent in Spain to man from male friend and friend's sister. Vienna OPG 3133/40, after 1905.



Fig. 100. "Christmas Eve." Father Christmas, presents, and three girls, from father to daughter in Alençon; undivided back. France, S.I.P. 1115.



Fig. 101. "Snow and cold come with sweet Christmas." Snowy man surprises two girls by hearth. Sent to couple in Le Raincy. France, EPR 186.



Fig. 102. "God protects France. 1. God has shown his love for France above all other nations. 2. The Sacred Heart, Lourdes, La Salette, the Miraculous Medal, Saint Michael, etc." From man in St-Laurent-du-Mottay (M-et-L) to female cousin in Angers. Paris, Librairie des Catéchismes, after 1905.



Fig. 103. "God protects France!"
France [dice] 179, c. 1905.



Fig. 104. "France, despite the impious sects, will always be joined to the Seat of Peter." To female teacher in *école libre*, Sous-le-Bois, c. 1906. Paris, D. Saudinos Ritouret.



Fig. 105. "Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité."

From Versailles to Mlle. in Paris, July 1906, undivided back. France, ATS.

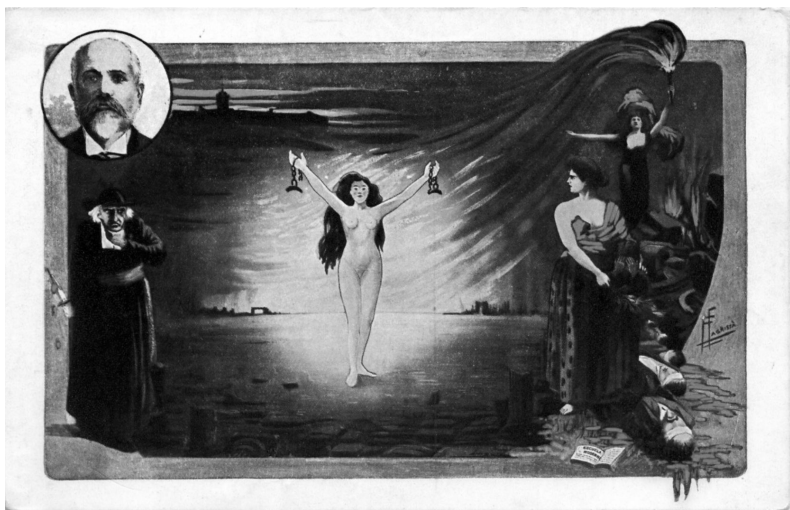


Fig. 106. "Montjuich - La vision ultime (The last vision)." Postcard c. 1909 of "Tableau en couleurs, format 65x50 cm." by F. Sagristá after the execution in Barcelona of Francisco Ferrer. Geneva, Le Réveil.

*Supernaturals and the Absent
in World War I postcards*

In France, as the prospect of conflict with Germany increased, starting June 30, 1913, first two girls, then scores of adults, began to have visions in the village of Alzonne, 10 kilometers from Carcassonne. The visions started in poplars on the bank of the River Fresquel, then spread to the sky above the highway that passed through the town and also to the cemetery. In all there were over a hundred seers (some from Carcassonne and Bordeaux), until, in March 1914, the diocese decided the whole thing was diabolical. What people were seeing on the trees and in the sky seems to have been much like the art and photomontage visionary postcards then so popular. (*Fig. 107*)

As later at Ezquioga, different people saw different things, whether Jeanne d'Arc (as a shepherdess at her house in Domrémy, on a white horse with a banner, in shining mail leading King Charles on the way to Reims), St. Michael, the Sacred Heart, the Virgin (a lady in white, with a blue girdle, a lady with a child in her arms, a lady with wings like a guardian angel), St. Catherine, the devil, or a fiery serpent. These were the kinds of images the popular Catholic weekly *Le Pèlerin* had for decades been providing in dramatic color.¹⁸ The active French spiritualist community

took note, and through them the Irish revolutionary Maud Gonne went with her daughter and wrote back to William Butler Yeats that the daughter of a miller saw messages in Latin in the sky and that it was good Latin.¹⁹

Remembered in retrospect, some of the visions were prophetic—like that of trains carrying African troops hurtling through the night sky, or soldiers wearing gas masks, or a ship with African troops sinking. Senegalese troops did pass on trains through Carcassonne months later. Others, like the cathedral of Reims in flames held by Jeanne d’Arc, foreshadowed allegorical images that appeared on postcards, like Jeanne at the ruined Reims cathedral.²⁰

Visions or dreams of heavenly armies clashing in the sky, of course, were a staple of seers and prophets in the late Middle Ages and early modern period.²¹ As World War I began, scenes much like the visions seen at Alzonne appeared in the upper portions of composite images throughout Europe, connecting the loved ones at home to the loved ones at the front, capturing, like the visions, the presence of the war in people’s minds and anxieties (*Figs. 108–110*).

World War I was, among other things, the great postcard war, with billions of postcards crisscrossing between home and front.²² In France and Germany, mail to soldiers was free and sending postcards al-

most a patriotic duty. In France, all the supernaturals and allegorical figures in the prewar postcards enthusiastically enlisted (*Figs. 111–114*). The national woman, France or Marianne called men to battle, was protected by them and protected them (*Figs. 115–118*). She appeared at times to have a halo, available to Catholics and non-Catholics.²³ Important generals, especially Joffre, were like national saints (*Figs. 119–120*),²⁴ and cards were sold with ersatz Our Fathers dedicated to them.²⁵ Père Noël pitched in bringing war toys (*Figs. 121–122*), and Joffre as Père Noël brought victory to the sleeping nation.²⁶ The supernaturals led the troops and protected individual soldiers, as in other countries (*Fig. 123–126*). Soldiers' battle visions were published in newspapers, and lay persons like Claire Ferchaud of Loublande had visions that linked the saints and the nation.²⁷ Postcards depicted imagined appearances of Thérèse of Lisieux,²⁸ Our Lady of Lourdes and other generic versions of Mary²⁹ (*Fig. 127*). After the war was over, on the 1870s border in Lorraine, people gathered on late afternoons to see the silhouette of Mary next to a church³⁰ (*Fig. 128*).

Jeanne d'Arc was a ripe symbol for the war, and her canonization in 1920, as seen on the cover of *Le Pèlerin*, provided a symbolic reconciliation of the allegorical France with the allegorical Church, under

the gaze of the crucifix as a reminder of the millions of lives lost (*Figs. 129–130*).

Throughout Europe, composite image postcards helped bridge the gap (visually, and through the mail) between home and soldiers. If World War I mobilized supernaturals, it also, as the French historian Monique Huss has put it, mobilized hearts.³¹ The most successful commercial cards in turn reflected sentiments that people wanted to express. From the messages on the back one learns of the great variety available in even remote locations. Soldiers on the one hand, and women in family networks on the other, hunted out specific pictorial combinations (three children, two of them girls). There are still in American drugstores large displays of greeting cards for a variety of occasions, as, say, for a sick aunt.

While in some cards prayers for the absent one were directed through an image or crucifix, more common are cards in which the communication is made directly through the photograph of the loved one (*Sein Bild!*), or the unaided imagination (*Figs. 131–136*).

Postcards could express directed sentiment and thought, and the virtual accompaniment that many loved ones experienced provided a protective presence through their correspondence (not unusually with daily, numbered postcards).³² In this sense, each combined image was a votive image and each loved one a

supernatural, just as supernaturals were represented in combined images as intensely loved (*Figs. 137–142*).



Fig. 107. "Alzonne. The banks of the Fresquel (Site of the Apparition)."
Carcassonne, Photo Roudière. 1913.



Fig. 108. "The gleaners; all work for the good of France." From soldier? to brother on farm, June 12, 1916, about harvest. Boulogne-sur-Seine, G. Piprot.



Fig. 109. "Homage to our combatants!" From Bussière-Poitevine, July 29, 1915, to Mlle in Angoulême. "Bonjour et bons baisers." Paris, Gloria 69.



Fig. 110. "Our Father, who art..." Sent to Countess in Zagreb, Dec. 23, 1917 with seasons greetings. Berlin, Albrecht & Meister Aktiengesellschaft.

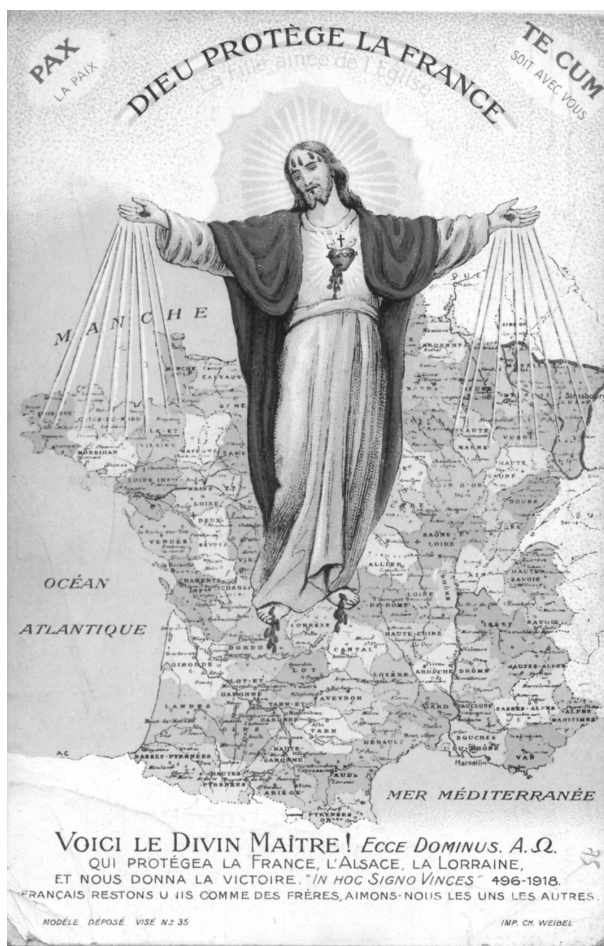


Fig. 111. "God save France. . . Frenchmen, let us be like brothers, let us love one another." From woman on her return from Sacred Heart shrine at Montmartre, to couple in Roubaix. Paris, Imp. Ch. Weibel, 1918.



Fig. 112. "Go... daughter of France, the time has come!" Sold for the benefit of the Popular Work of Masses for dead soldiers, 1914–1915, founded in Dijon. Paris, Catala Frères.



Fig. 113. "Our allies in heaven" ...Words spoken by Abbé Sertillanges in Notre-Dame de Paris so that brave soldiers would come back with glory. Paris, Carrier.



Fig. 114. "The Sacred Heart protects France and its Allies. The Virgin Mary and the saint protectors of France pray with all Christians for the triumph of France and its Allies, which is also that of Civilization and Justice." [On back: "Prayer for the victory of our armies," including Sacred Heart of Jesus, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Sts. Michael, Genevieve, Martin, Louis, Clotilde, Denis, Remy, Radegonde, and Blessed Jeanne d'Arc.] Holy card, Paris, H. Vaudey.



Fig. 115. "But there is another woman... the Motherland..."
 [Paris, Croissant] Photo: Sescan.



Fig. 116. "Let us defend France." Soldier in Marbach to female benefactor, Dec. 10, 1914. "Madam, It is with pleasure that I just received a letter from my dear Louise. Many many thanks for the five francs you gave her to send to me..." Paris, Gloria 73.



Fig. 117. "Happy New Year 1915." Soldier in Réchésy (Haut Rhin) to sister in Vic-le-Comte (Puy-de-Dôme), Dec. 22, 1914. "Thank you, news soon." France, CD 14.



Fig. 118. "France's mercy." From man in Ste-Foy-l'Argentière (Rhône) to woman in St-Maurice-sur-Dargoire, Feb. 2, 1915. Reuil, A.H. Katz JK 9405.



Fig. 119. Postcard with General Joffre. From husband at front to wife, July 30, 1915. Myosotis EME 81.



Fig. 120. "Vive la France!" Grandmother and aunt in La Flèche to boy in Châtel-lerault, Aug. 22, 1915. Bois-Colombes, L'At. d'Art Photographique, Furia 363.



Fig. 121. "Merry Christmas." From aunt to nephew in Azay-le-Rideau (Indre-et-Loire). Boulogne-sur-Seine, G. Piprot, Dix 302.



Fig. 122. "Merry Christmas." From girl in Lamagistère (Tarn-et-Garonne) to girl in Auvillar, Dec. 26, 1914. Paris, PH 268.



Fig. 123. "Angel of God, watch over my husband." From soldier at Champigneulle near Nancy to female friend near Cassneuil (Lot-et-Garonne), June 25, 1915. Reuil, A.H. Katz JK 9393.



Fig. 124. "Hope." From soldier to Fräulein in Telfs, Tirol, Nov. 1, 1916.
Leipzig, Regel & Krug Serie 2678/6.



*Fig. 125. "Our Father." Sent April 11, 1917, to Horstermark, Germany.
Vienna, Brüder Kohn, 527-2.*



Fig. 126. "For God and the Fatherland." [Lourdes] From soldier at front to sisters and mother in Montfort, Oct. 18, 1914. Paris, Le Deley ELD 15.



Fig. 127. "Our Lady of the Trenches." From woman in Neuville-sur-Saône to wounded lover in hospital, Nov. 1, 1918, "...I send you this little card of Our Lady of the Trenches; may she be our protector..." Paris, Bonne Press.



Fig. 128. “Novéant-sur-Moselle. Curious mirage – Vision of the Virgin.” Early 1920. From sibling to sister in Morelmaison (Vosges) “you must have learned about this apparition in the newspapers. I send you a picture of it; it is 10 km from here right at the old frontier.” Photo: R. Mahut.



Fig. 129. "Vision of Jeanne d'Arc." Father at war to young daughter on the farm, Sept. 1, 1915. Boulogne-sur-Seine, G. Piprot, Dix 166/3.

"Ma chère petite Yvonne , Je viens vite te dire deux mots, et en même temps te faire un gros mimi tu en feras un pour moi a la maman et a la grand mère. Vas-tu toujours en champ, tes petits veaux et tes moutons sont-ils au moins gentils. Les raisins sont ils deja murs tu dois en manger en allant au champ avec Jean. Je finis ma petite Yvonne en t'embrassant bien fort, ainsi que la maman et la grand mère. je t'embrasse bien fort comme je t'aime. Ton papa Dandins."



Fig. 130. "St. Jeanne d'Arc in 1921 reconciles France and the Church."
Paris, *Le Pèlerin*, Jan. 2, 1921, cover. [Canonization was May 16, 1920].



Fig. 131. "Prayer for the absent one." From woman in Chartres, Dec. 29, 1914, to male friend. Paris, Gloria 90.



Fig. 132. "Praying: Good Lord protect our dear father." From Budapest to woman in field hospital in Liptó-Rózsahegy, July 15, 1916. Budapest, M. F. R. T. 254.



Fig. 133. "They tell us that we are the family of a hero..."
Paris, A. Noyer, Patriotic 1019.



Fig. 134. "Only one who knows longing knows what I suffer." To soldier in Tongeren, Belgium, from "deinen Frau und Kinder" in Nuremberg, April 20, 1915. Berlin, Paul Fink 3737/4.



Fig. 135. "What do the women of France dream of? The absent one, the loved one, vengeance..." From woman in Arcueil to lover in war, Nov. 24, 1915. "My dear little man I adore, How happy I am to send you this little card, tender and dear keepsake of our sincere love..." Paris, Artige, ACA 2154/1.



Fig. 136. "Far from you, close to you." Paris, A. Noyer, bugle 103.



Fig. 137. "In heart and thought I am always with you." From Jeanne to soldier, Sept. 18, 1915. "My dear little kid... I don't know where you are but I follow you just the same..." France, Edition Lorraine.



Fig. 138. "I watch over <dream and long for> you / I dream of you." Modified postcard from soldier after battle to "ma petite chérie," Oct. 5, 1916. " ...the poor soldier who sold me this postcard was killed tonight..." Levallois-Perret, J. Tailhades, NBoulanger 94.



Fig. 139. "Vision!" From woman in Gornac, Gironde, to lover in hospital, Army of the Orient, June 15, 1916. "...No more news from you. Could that mean you're coming back to France? oh! what happiness how happy I'd be to press you against my heart and give you all my kisses..." Bois-Colombes, L'At. d'Art Photographique, Furia 513.



Fig. 140. "My thoughts fly home to you, when a greeting and letter arrives from you!" From aunt and uncle to a woman in Golya [?], in Hungarian. Leipzig, Regel & Krug 2685 5.



Fig. 141. "Far from eyes, close to heart." From soldier to woman in St. Germain Laval, July 10, 1915: "Still well, your friend J. Chabert." France, ACA 2101.



Fig. 142. Sent within Vrbanja (Croatia) from man to young woman, Aug. 11, 1914. Berlin, E. A. Schwerdt-Feger, EAS 8856/2.

*Absence and presence in family
photographs around World War I*

Photomontage was used in real, studio portraits as well (the examples I have are Spanish, French, Belgian, Dutch, Russian and Italian) to unite couples and families separated by emigration, military service, imprisonment or death. For separation is an intimation of death, death once removed.

In the composite photographs we see an emulation, whether on the part of the studio photographers, their clients, or both, of the commercial cards centering on presence and absence. Indeed, in the case of the refined Dutch and Belgian prisoner of war photomontages, the personal cards are at times hard to tell apart from commercial ones.

By the time of the postcard boom the shift from holy card and religious print to personal photos as treasured icons had already taken place, for *Carte de Visite* or *Cabinet* photographs were accessible to persons of modest means. In the commercial postcard pictures themselves, and in personal family photos, there is surprisingly little depiction of postcards. The photograph, not the commercial postcard, is what the women, the children, the parents at home frame, hold and look at, what the soldier and the prisoner of war have on their tables, their key chains, or in

their hands. However artistic, expressive, entertaining, or moving, commercial postcards in their mighty billions were a blip on the screen compared to the emotional meaning of the photographs that preceded them, coincided with them, and outlasted them.³³ (*Figs. 143–159.*)

In this light, in family portraits with soldiers taken during World War I, many of them when the soldiers were on leave, we see the prospect of the ultimate separation. They are pictures in which the absent are fused with the present in case they are eternally sun-dered.³⁴ These pictures are part of the family history of most of the inhabitants in Central and Western Europe (*Figs. 160–174.*)

Portraits pass from being mementos to memento mori.³⁵ As such they can bridge the gap first between present and absent, then between the living and the dead. All are potentially pictures of visions truly seen only by those who knew them. A Hungarian historian told me about her grandfather from Zemplén County who emigrated to South America to work in the mines and send money to his family. After a few letters the only time he was heard from again, years later, was a single photo postcard of him standing in a studio next to a column, leaning on a stand, with a phrase on the back with his date of death.



Fig. 143. Girl with mother's portrait, c. 1910.
Photomontage on thick stock, Barcelona, J. Alonso.



Fig. 144. Man thinking of woman. "To my dear mother and sisters I dedicate this keepsake with all the affection of my heart, Jaime Monreal." Spain, after 1905.



Fig. 145. Woman with two girls thinks of absent man, to whom photomontage was sent for saint's day, July 14, 1915. Spain (sold from Elda, Alicante).



Fig. 146. "Lola Marignan and her grandchildren."
Photomontage, Valencia, Foto Pavia.



Fig. 147. Soldier writes to absent woman. Photomontage on thick stock, c. 1915–1923. Cartagena, Haro Hermanos.



Fig. 148. Young woman writes to absent soldier.
Photomontage on thick stock, c. 1915–1923. Postcard. Spain.



Fig. 149. Italian soldier thinks of woman.
Photomontage, Livorno, Veroli.



Fig. 150. Soldier in studio.
Carte de Visite, Marseilles, L. Gaulard. 6.3x10.5 cm.



Fig. 151. Woman and child with absent soldier.
Photomontage on Guilleminot, Boespflug et Cie (Paris) stock.



Fig. 152. Soldier with photo of daughter.
France.



Fig. 153. Family and absent man, possibly prisoner of war. Photomontage, Belgium? (purchased from Bruges).



Fig. 154. Family and absent soldier, possibly prisoner of war.
Photomontage on Guilleminot, Boespflug et Cie (Paris) stock.



Fig. 155. Soldier and absent family.
Photomontage, Germany.



Fig. 156. Children and absent soldier.
Photomontage on postcard - Carte Postale K Ltd stock. Belgium or France.



Fig. 157. Father and soldier prisoner. "Zaandam 31-1-1918."
Photomontage, Netherlands.



Fig. 158. Berthe in Liège and Lambert Hermans, prisoner of war near Hannover. "Bonne fête." Photomontage, Liège.



Fig. 159. Extended family in Liège garden, sent to Lambert Hermans, prisoner of war, from father, Sept. 22, 1915, with news and questions about money, letters and parcels. Liège.



Fig. 160. Soldier and family. Postcard – Carte Postale, France



Fig. 161. Soldier and wife. Germany.



Fig. 162. Soldier and family. Germany.



Fig. 163. Soldier and wife on Guilleminot, Boespflug et Cie (Paris) stock.



Fig. 164. Officer and family, “de 3 à 6 heures, Parc des Célestins Inférieur.”
Sept. 30, 1918. Vichy, Photo Ambrost.



Fig. 165. Soldier and family in courtyard, France.



Fig. 166. Soldiers and families in café. Postcard – Carte Postale. France.



Fig. 167. Soldier and family, Germany.



Fig. 168. Soldier on leave and family, St-Didier d'Assiat (Ain).



Fig. 169. Medic and two women, boy with hoop. Postcard – Carte Postale, France.



Fig. 170. Soldier, wife, and daughter, on Guilleminot, Boespflug et Cie (Paris), stock.



Fig. 171. Serbian soldier and extended family. "A keepsake to brother-in-law and sister from Zica, Kaja and the children." Belgrade, Studio on Kralja Milana 93.



Fig 172. Soldier, wife, and dog. Postcard – Carte Postale. France.



Fig. 173. Soldier, wife, and daughter. Postcard – Carte Postale, cropped, France.



Fig. 174. Henri Rinsonnet, Caporal 5e Chasseurs à Pie, prisoner at Soltau (Hannover) to wife in Dison-lez-Verviers, Belgium, May 20, 1917. Family photomontages are in frames on table, cameo photo on watch chain, writing (not legible) on card in his hand. Soltau, Photo Dethmann (of Wolfenbüttel).

Summing up

If one conclusion from these three chapters would be that very little religious gets permanently thrown away, another would be that people embody history, literature, images. History is important, because what happened to our families, our towns, our nations, our peoples in the past—our wars, our defeats, our prosperity, our hunger, our enslavement, our enslaving, our persecution—is hammered into our way of being as surely as a genetic code, affecting the way we are raised and the way we raise, what we are taught in schools and churches and the way we are taught it. Toribia and the people of Casas de Benítez, Fausto and those who believed him in Burguillos, Francisco Martínez and those who believed his image and his fits along the sheep road, the seers of Ezquioga who replicated the gestures of the Baroque, Jean Salvadé who learned how to carry himself by the way his visitors reacted to him, the photographers and their models who spoke to the consumers' visual idiom, embodied the stories and histories, music and verses they had come to know, the ceremonies they were used to, the paintings and images around them, reaching back over hundreds of years. In the Spanish Civil War, bands of leftists systematically destroyed religious images, including all those of Casas de Benítez along

with the San Isidro of the rain procession, all the images of Burguillos, and all those of Piera, where the rainmaking Christ was intentionally reduced to ashes. That Toribia and Fausto could still have late-medieval style visions on the eve of turmoil that would include iconicide,³⁶ and that the women of El Bonillo imprisoned for protecting their image could see a crucifix against the moon testify to the deep and long-term vitality of stories in our consciousness. In Spain, a demonstration of that vitality was precisely the sustained, determined effort to eliminate the connection among people, images, and clergy in the years from 1936 to 1939, and subsequently in a more mild and perhaps more effective manner under state socialism in Eastern Europe.

The invention of photography resulted in a breathtaking democratization of image in which ordinary people and their loved ones became each other's icons. But the long history of religious visions by people from all walks of life, from the separated husband Antón Díaz in El Bonillo to the children, seamstresses, domestic servants, illiterate gardeners, and farm laborers of the twentieth century, demonstrates that the impulse to visit, touch, entertain, share feeling with, and be visited, touched and adopted by the divine is a human propensity that is every bit as daring and revolutionary

as that of the iconoclasts. Like photography, it too involves the capture of heaven.

Notes

Preface

¹ Anna Fedele, "Mary Magdalene, Menstrual Blood and Mother Earth: An Anthropology of Spiritual Feminist Pilgrimages in Contemporary France and Catalonia," unpublished PhD thesis, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 2007, and her *Looking for Mary Magdalene* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

Chapter 1

¹ Bitel and Gainer, "Looking the Wrong Way," and Lisa Bitel, personal communication, June 1998.

² The other sites of visions that appeared in national newspapers between July and October 26, 1931, aside from the many in Gipuzkoa, Álava and Navarra associated with Ezquioga, include Rielves (Toledo) and Guadamur (Toledo) in August, and Orgiva (Granada), Guadalajara, and Sigüenza in September. See Christian, *Visionaries*, ch. 7.

³ "los retrasados mentales que aún creen en 'las apariciones' y esperan el milagro . . . [como] la reata que sigue a los intrigantes clericales . . . [después de] tantos siglos de superstición y servidumbre". in Giménez de Aguilar, "La revolución que hay que hacer," Aug. 10, 1931, 2. Mandrágora, "De la España fanática del siglo XX," Aug. 17, 1931, 5, similarly referred to "inferioridades mentales," and the poet León de Huelves Crespo, speaking at a Radical Socialist rally in Villarrubia de Santiago, declared, "In our Republic we should avoid having liars who invent miracles and imbeciles who believe them" (*La Libertad* [Madrid], Nov. 17, 1931, 10; en nuestra república debemos evitar que haya mentirosos que inventen milagros e imbéciles que los crean).

⁴ "¿También en Cuenca?" *República* (Cuenca), Oct. 26, 1931, 1. (In the section "Martillazos" which is signed "La Redacción"):

Sí señores, sí; también en Cuenca ha habido apariciones. En un pueblecito de la Mancha, Casas de Benítez, y en ocasión de hallarse cogiendo habas, Toribia «La Vaquera»—cuen-

tan unos señores naturales de dicho pueblo—al levantar la cabeza, encontróse con la mirada humilde, suplicante y un poco conmisericordiosa de un *Señor con toda la barba* que le pedía un puñado de habas. Apresuróse la susodicha vidente a cogerlas, solicitando entonces el *aparecido* se las diese de las que llevaba cogidas en el mandil. Hízolo así, al mismo tiempo que se lamentaba de la pertinaz sequía. El *aparecido*, un tanto compasivo, enarcó las cejas, abrió de desmesuradamente los ojos, y díjole:

— Esa sequía es porque quieren. Saquen en procesión a San Isidro de Casas de Benítez y con la Virgen de la Cabeza de Pozo Amargo, los unen en el sitio llamado La Poza y las cataratas del Niágara serán una simple regadera, comparadas con lo que va a caer.

Dicho esto, y antes de que reaccionara «La Vaquera» del asombro, desapareció...

Sin duda, la buena señora se dio tal arte para convencer a las autoridades, de ambos pueblos, que, a pesar de ser republicanas—esto era después del 14 de abril, allá que van ambos santos en procesión, acompañados de unas cinco mil personas llegadas de Sisante, La Roda, Casas de Haro, Casas de Guijarro y aldeaños, provistas todas de sus correspondientes paraguas en busca del milagro. Pero, ¡oh ironías del destino! El cielo que amaneció nublado aquel día, dando lugar a que saboreasen los más creyentes el pseudo milagro, apenas llegada la hora empezó a despejarse de tal forma que la vuelta hubo de hacerse bajo el paraguas por miedo... a las inclemencias de Febo que sonreía satisfecho de su burla.

⁵ And accessible because the Centro de Estudios de Castilla-La Mancha offers the region's historical newspapers in keyword-searchable pdfs online, one of the first panregional initiatives of its kind in Spain.

⁶ Telephone conversation, Marisol Llamas García (b. 1939), Casas de Benítez. "La abuela Toribia era mucho de misa, aunque

no beata. Creía mucho en Dios. Era sin estudio (como mi madre y padre tampoco). A la abuela Toribia se le apareció es como si fuera Dios, con barbas y pelo largo, y había tanto sequía, y el de las barbas dijo que sacaran a San Isidro y Santa Maria de la Cabeza, que llovería. Y se subió una ventisca, y entonces empezó a llover” [a neighbor’s voice: “pero no llovió ni nada”].

⁷ The word she used was *Dios*, but when I asked for clarification she described, not God the Father, but the figure of Christ.

⁸ “pero tenía el pelo largo, y el San Isidro lo lleva recogido.” I asked her whether it was a Christ dressed in a certain color, like the purple-robed Christ the Nazarene bearing a Cross in nearby Sisante, whose shrine people from Casas de Benítez visit with vows, but she had no idea of his dress or that he carried anything.

⁹ José Toledo Ortiz (b. Sept. 15. 1920), telephone conversation, Feb. 9, 2010, Casas de Benítez.

¹⁰ Honorato García (b. May 16, 1920), telephone conversation, Feb. 9, 2010, Madrid.

¹¹ Salud Toledano Serrano, age eighty-seven, Casas de Benítez, in telephone conversation with Pascual Martínez, Feb. 21, 2010.

¹² Martínez, *Tradiciones y costumbres*, 115–16. There is no mention of the procession in the Casas de Benítez Town Council minutes, and the parish archive was burned in the Civil War. The parish priest of Pozoamargo, Miguel Ruíz Orozco, found no mention in the parish records there (personal communication, Oct. 3, 2010).

¹³ “Toribia decía que había visto la Virgen de la Cabeza, y fue ella que organizó la procesión,” José Toledo Ortiz, Feb. 9, 2010.

¹⁴ “Toribia cultivó una huerta con tomates, habas muy cerca del pueblo en el Camino de San Clemente. Allí se le apareció un hombre, no se sabe si Dios, Cristo, un ángel. Era cuando Toribia estaba cogiendo habas. Fue la comedilla del pueblo,” Salud Toledano Serrano, Feb. 21, 2010.

¹⁵ Casas de Benítez Municipal Archive, 1932 voters list; she died at the age of sixty-four in 1938, of a heart condition, according to the towns’s civil register. Courtesy of Pascual Martínez.

¹⁶ Marisol Llamas and Pascual Martínez, personal communications. The enterprise still exists, run by the then owner's grandson, in his nineties, but it does not have records of employees in the 1930s, many of whom would have had only verbal contracts in any case.

¹⁷ More particularly at a location known as Las Periconas.

¹⁸ *El Sol* (Madrid), May 30, 1929, 6, "Estragos del tormenta," by a reporter who visited Casas de Benítez ("todo el término de este pueblo ha quedado destrozado") and surrounding towns.

¹⁹ For a Republican description of the fears supposedly aroused by the clergy in the municipal elections in April, see Basilio Martínez Pérez, "...Y la aldea tembló...", and for nearby Republican satisfaction at the burning of churches in Madrid on May 11, the cartoon and the poem by Rafael Alcázar Manzanares on page 3 in *Amanecer* (Tarancón) June 1, 1931.

²⁰ *El Corresponsal*, "Quero—Casos prodigiosos," *El Castellano* (Toledo), May 16, 1931, 2. "para impetrar de su intercesión la lluvia benéfica para los agostados [sic] campos y pidiendo su mediación para el bien de la Iglesia y de España." Similarly, some time before 1925, a crippled woman was cured after insisting on being carried to a rain procession of the Virgen de la Salud in Borox, according to *El Castellano* May 25, 1925, 3.

²¹ According to *República* (May 25, 1931, 3), nearby Vara del Rey, on May 12, on the occasion of an enthusiastic election rally, was completely Republican—"en su totalidad republicana." The Casas de Benítez council minutes for April 17, 1931, for which I thank Pascual Martínez, read: "The gentlemen listed were elected by popular vote without any political aspect by the will of the townspeople" (Los señores nombrados fueron elegidos en elección popular sin matiz alguno político por voluntad del pueblo). According to Martínez, most were firm Catholics. The pre-Republican mayor, José María Ruíz Ballesteros, stayed on as the second lieutenant mayor, and became mayor once more on August 15, 1931. On August 23, the council unanimously denied a petition from the head of the Socialist Casa del Pueblo for an independent

commission to examine the council expenses during the dictatorship from 1923 to 1931. The council allegedly opened the account books to public examination from August 10 and approved them on August 28. There were political clashes between two Republican parties in nearby Villalgordo del Júcar at the end of July 1931 that included a carnivalesque procession of women and children drawing two men playing accordion and guitar in a bread-delivery cart which ended in the intervention of the Civil Guard and one death by gunfire (*Diario de Albacete*, July 29, 1, July 30, 1). See also Martínez, *Noticias históricas*.

²² In April, May and June, accounts of apparitions of the Virgin were reported in the press in the north of Spain for Mendigorria in Navarra, and Torralba de Aragón in Huesca, Christian, *Visionaries*, 14–16.

²³ Marisol Llamas, interview by telephone, Nov. 8, 2010.

²⁴ Christian, “Islands in the Sea.”

²⁵ Del Río, *Madrid, Urbs Regia*, 93–118; Maria Assumpta Roig Torrentó, “Coexistencia.”

²⁶ “junto al sagrario.” Zarco Cuevas, *Relaciones*, 222 [1578], at Carrascosa del Campo, in this case, the image of Saint Anne.

²⁷ Marcos Arévalo, “La religiosidad popular.”

²⁸ The annual custom dates from at least fifty years ago, may have originated in a rain procession, and is referred to as a *rogativa*, or supplicatory ceremony.

²⁹ The most spectacular example in the Diocese of Cuenca was the concentration of special images from every town, including San Isidro from Casas de Benítez and Santa María de la Cabeza from Pozoamargo, for the canonical coronation of a Cuenca city image of Mary in 1957. See Álvarez Chirveches, *Crónica*.

³⁰ Christian, *Religiosidad local*, 148; for Achas, Pontevedra, photographs of Cristina García Rodero; Lisón Tolosana, “Aspectos del Pathos.”

³¹ For example, Nocito (Huesca) and Valtablado del Río (Guadalajara). See Christian, *Religiosidad local*, 149; Bellpuig de Urgel, Gelabertó Vilagrán, *La palabra del predicador*, 199.

³² Dorothy Noyes (personal communication) suggests as examples Raimon Casellas' novel, *Deu-nos aigua, majestat!* (1906), and the play by Joan Puig i Ferrer, *Aigües encantades* (first produced in 1908).

³³ *República*, July 13, 1931, 1:

Un cura sin influencia

¡Oh Cristo de la Salud,
hijo del Verbo bendito!
Echanos un poco de agua
que, por aquí, estamos fritos.
Esto, Henarejos, te pide
con toda su devoción,
y aunque llegue hasta los huesos
danos un gran remojón.
Y así, un día y otro día,
el buen capellán clamaba
para remozar los campos
que, abrasados, se secaban.
El Cielo oyó los clamores
de tan terco interceder,
y un pedrisco asoló todo,
sin dejar con qué encender.
E indignados los del pueblo,
con sigilo, y sin hablar,
al Santo Cristo bendito
lo quisieron estrellar.
(Histórico)

³⁴ For early modern Spanish rain processions in general, see: Faci, *Aragón*, passim; Cortés Peña, "Entre la religiosidad" and "Dos siglos"; López, "Las rogativas públicas"; Peris Albentosa, "La religiosidad instrumental"; Romeu Figueras, "Folklore de la lluvia"; Sáez de Ocariz, "Climatología y régimen de lluvia"; Zamora Pastor, "El estudio de la sequía"; Kamen, *The Phoenix and*

the Flame, 36–39, 180–81. For examples of preacher's casuistics when processions for rain were ineffective in eighteenth-century Catalonia, Gelabertó Vilagrán, *La palabra del predicador*, 190–202.

³⁵ The “relaciones topográficas” of Phillip II (1575–1580) asked for the motives for town-wide vows; about 4% of those with a reason remembered were for rain (Christian, *Religiosidad local*, 45, 62–3).

³⁶ References in Faci, *Aragón*: 1:131 procession to Fraga to return the image of El Salvador to the Trinitarian monastery in Torrente; 2:25 Belchite, Na. Sra. del Pueyo, 1710; 2:67 Ariño, Na. Sra. de los Arcos, May 1, 1737; 2:481 bridge, Hecho, Na. Sra. de Escabué; 2:522 Protestant in Uncastillo, Na. Sra. de los Bañales, 1713. For examples from New Castile, a crippled five-year-old girl healed by the statue of Na. Sra. de la Alcoba passing in a rain procession in El Casar de Talavera, in Viñas y Mey, *Relaciones...Toledo*, I:253, reported in 1575; and the rain of a milk-like substance in 1664 during a procession of thanks for rain in Auñón (Guadalajara), Castellote, *Libros de milagros*, 81–82.

³⁷ Faci, *Aragón*, 1:108 for Tarazona, c. 1737, “Quando sale así venerada esta S. Imagen, pone la devoción a los Niños quebrados enmedio en las calles, y quedan curados muchos, al passar sobre ellos la S. Imagen assi venerada.”

³⁸ Missions in Guadamur in *El Castellano* (Toledo) May 29, 1909, 3 (auxiliary bishop and ex-minister of war at thanks ceremony), in Urda, in *El Castellano* May 31, 1921, 3.

³⁹ Cortés Peña, “Entre la religiosidad,” for conflicts in Toledo and Reinos. A serious comparative study of the different rituals for rain prayers and processions with a sense of critical zones and geographical variety remains to be written.

⁴⁰ See Christian, *Religiosidad local*, 81–82, 146–47 for Ajofrín text. *Caridades* (ceremonial food handouts), in *ibid.*, 57–58, 78–82, and in Faci, *Aragón*, 1:129–30, Torrente (Fraga), 1703; 2:486 (c. 1737) Belsue (Na. Sra. de Linares), 3:119 Fañanás (Na. Sra. de Bureta) 1737.

⁴¹ Miramón, “Gallur: Acto Civil”: “El pedrisco, las cosechas, la sequía, etc., han sido manejados por ellos en sus discursos bélicos para atemorizar al pobre campesino de que Dios le castigaba por haberse desviado de la senda del bien. Y si sucedía lo contrario, ¡ah! entonces, Dios sabía premiar con largueza a sus sumisos corderos.”

⁴² Christian, *Apariciones*, 244–48; Christian, “Six Hundred Years”; Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*; Elliott, *Proving Woman*.

⁴³ Christian, *Apariciones*, 199–236: in 1514 (when a shepherd saw Saint Roch), 1516 (when the same shepherd saw Our Lady of the Sorrows) and 1523 (when a young married woman saw Our Lady on her doorstep at night).

⁴⁴ Perales, *Memorias*, shrine website www.valledeayora.net/tradicionpopular/elangeldeayora/index.htm, seen Feb. 22, 2011.

⁴⁵ In Jafre (Girona) a young blue-clad wayfarer asked a ploughman how many highway crosses there were in the town and then said there should be more, revealed the healing properties of a spring, and finally gave as proof of what he said the imminent death of a baby. The death he predicted was confirmed by the tolling of the church bell as the farmer made his way to tell the parish priest about the message. The shrine of Our Lady of the Holy Spring that resulted still exists. Testimony about the visions was taken when the shrine was built in 1461 (Christian, *Apariciones*, 173–80).

⁴⁶ By the early sixteenth century, the people of Ajofrín near Toledo believed that a vision similar to that of Toribia was at the origin of their annual long-distance rain procession. A damsel appeared to a herdsman in the Montes de Toledo, asked him “what people were talking about and what their needs were” (qué era lo que se decía o trataba en el mundo y las necesidades que había), told him to go to Ajofrín and ask for an annual rain procession, and provided a proof so he would be believed (his staff fixed to his hand). Full text in Spanish, in Christian, *Religiosidad local*, 280–83.

⁴⁷ The account here is from Crosispis, *Camí espayós* (1764), and from *Compendio histórico* (1833), 1–5; both are based on oral accounts and place the story five hundred years before.

⁴⁸ “con este motibo le parecio fomentar que le auia rebelado algunas cosas y entre ellas que auia de llober de la misma suerte que el santo christo que tenia sudaba sangre.” The original Spanish text in Christian, “Francisco Martínez,” 104; in the translation, I have changed the voice from reported to direct speech.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 103. “Hallándose guardando una dehesa de la Villa de san Esteban en Andalucía por el mes de noviembre del año proximo pasado en la que auia de pastar una manada de Don Antonio Velazquez vecino y rexidior perpetuo de [Molina de Aragón], una tarde de dicho mes, estando sentado en la puerta de un cortijo que estaba cerca de ella al concluir la devocion que tenía de rezar el rosario y tres credos, oio una voz. Y buelta la cabeza a ella vio un peregrino que le pidio le diese por Dios un poco de agua. Y que le respondio que asi el Señor la imbiase para los campos como la mantenian en las fuentes para los pecadores. Con lo que entro en el cortijo y le saco una cantarilla de barro a modo de jarra llena de agua. Y que el vebio hasta un quartillo. Y buuelto a salir le pregunté si abia llobido por las partes de donde benia. Y que le dixo que en partes abia llobido y en partes no, y que en aquella tierra lloberia por Santa Lucia.”

⁵⁰ Ibid., 103–104. “como de diez y ocho años poco mas, o menos, muy rubio de cabellos, zejas, y barba con tunica entre blanca y morada zenida por la cintura sin saber con que, los ojos negros y inclinados al cielo, las mexillas blancas y encarnadas, descalzo de pie y pierna, con un bordon en la mano al remate una bola el que estaba usado.”

⁵¹ Sánchez-Ocaña, “Apariciones en Toledo.”

⁵² “Para quien es el agua que coges?” “Tiene agua ya el pozo? Pronto la tendrá.” He appears to have had the demeanor of a non-nonsense schoolmaster.

⁵³ “Es Jesucristo! Es Jesucristo!”

⁵⁴ “Yo te diré lo que deseo, no me tengas miedo.”

⁵⁵ Elena had imagined them as harvesting wheat instead of digging a well.

⁵⁶ Díaz Hernández, *Burguillos de Toledo*, 135.

⁵⁷ “y se visten, y ponen abitos de romeros y peregrinos, de esclavinas y sacos de sayal, y otros paños de diuersas colores, y sombreros grandes con insignias y bordones” *Prematica, En que se prohibe* (1590) f2 verso.

⁵⁸ *Diario Español* (Tarragona), Aug. 3, 1947, 3: “A pilgrim in Tarragona. Our offices have been visited by the penitent of St Roch, Jerónimo Barrachina, who proposes to visit all the shrines in Spain. Barrachina is a native of Alcoy, and his pilgrimage is the result of a promise. He also intends once he has fulfilled his promise to walk to Rome to prostrate himself before the Pope.” *Yugo* (Almería), Aug. 8, 1947, 4: “Yesterday we were visited by the pilgrim Vicente Maestre, who is circulating through Spain and has been in all the main provinces with a total of 10,773 kilometers. He is a native of Petrer, in the province of Alicante, where he is heading now. He began to walk through our nation in 1945, pausing mainly in cities and villages where he tells about his pilgrim mission.” The Catalan anthropologist Joan Prat walked the Camino de Santiago in the summer of 2010, and among the characters he came across was a perpetual pilgrim who lived from alms. He had walked the route seven times, and confessed to Prat he was totally fed up with it. Prat, “¿Por qué caminan?”

⁵⁹ As to the medieval Hungarian pilgrim/hermit San Wentila (d. 890), in Punxin, Galicia. The chapel of Loreto, in La Almunia de Doña Godina (Zaragoza), was allegedly founded in the seventeenth century by a Catalan pilgrim, Jaime de la Carrera, who brought the image and stayed on as a hermit (Pérez, *Historia Mariana*, 5:288). We read in *La Época* (Madrid), July 20, 1888, 3: “*La Verdad* of Tortosa says that the road that that leads to the cave where a pilgrim woman of truly exceptional conduct is staying has become a true pilgrimage route. The infinite number of persons who visit her, generally women of all conditions, tell stupendous things about the pilgrim woman. According to them, her life is so austere and penitential that she tortures her body with rough

sackcloth, sleeps outdoors, and only eats potatoes cooked just in water. The alms she receives, after covering her minimal expenses, she distributes to the poor, and by nightfall she has not a penny left for the next day. What is more, she confesses and receives communion every day.”

⁶⁰ The relics left by a sick pilgrim who died in Escalonilla in the early sixteenth century (Faci, *Aragón*, 1:382–83); the images of the Crucifix and Na. Sra. de los Dolores of Alcañiz left by the pilgrim Juan de León in the early 1570s (*ibid.*, 1:72–75).

⁶¹ On the *longue durée* of the pilgrim’s potential for sacrality, see Spaccarelli, *A Medieval Pilgrim’s Companion* and “La ideología de la peregrinación.”

⁶² Claret, *Catecismo*, 443. “Piensa que cualquier pobre representa a Jesucristo; no serías tú el primero a quien el mismo Jesucristo, bajo la apariencia de un mendigo, pidiese una limosna.”

⁶³ Kamen, *Phoenix and the Flame*, 181.

⁶⁴ For a description of Alfonso XII washing and kissing the feet of twelve poor men in the presence of grand dames and the wives of ambassadors, see Dy Safford, “Crónica de la moda: En Palacio,” *ABC*, April 2, 1920, 9–10. The report, mostly concerned with the fashions worn by the spectators, concludes “when we see all the greatness of the earth incarnate in our monarchs, kneeling before the poor, who represent Jesus Christ... a voice inside us tells us that Spain will not succumb, as other nations have, to the dominion of those who want to govern without God.” (al ver todas las grandezas de la tierra encarnadas en nuestras Monarcas, de rodillas ante los pobres, que representan a Jesucristo... una voz interna nos dice que España no sucumbirá, como otras naciones, bajo el dominio de los que quieren gobernar sin Dios). The last of the royal ceremonies took place April 2, 1931 (*ABC*, April 3, 5, 19–22). In Cuenca in 1928 the bishop washed the feet of twelve old men watched by a large audience that included the City Council (*El Día de Cuenca*, April 6, 1928, 1). Gaya Nuño, *Tratado de mendicidad*, 160–62, reports the *Lavatorio* ceremony in the cathedral of Jaén in 1953

and his subsequent conversation with the beggars, who were paid 2 pesetas each.

⁶⁵ Pedrosa, "Calderón y La Oración del Peregrino."

⁶⁶ Claret, *Catecismo*, 444–45. "La quinta es: dar posada al peregrino. El n° 5 representa al patriarca Abrahan que da posada a unos peregrinos que él pensaba ser hombres y en realidad eran Angeles del Señor; y fue tanto lo que Dios apreció a Abrahan esta obra de misericordia, que por ella le prometió nada menos que hacerle padre de una numerosa descendencia y prodigarle abundancia de bienes espirituales y temporales. ¡Así premia Dios las obras de caridad a él y á los Angeles tan gratas! También los habitantes del castillo de Emaús juzgaron que era un hombre, un peregrino a quien daban posada, y en realidad era el mismo Jesucristo resucitado de tres días; así como aconteció a San Gregorio, que creyendo hospedar unos pobres peregrinos, se halló que eran Angeles. ¡Felices, sí, los que en tales obras de caridad se emplean! porque Dios les dará también eterna posada en su palacio celestial." We find the model of Abraham's exemplary lodging of three wayfarers, to whom he offers water so they can wash their feet, bread, milk, and meat (Genesis 18: 1–19) as a model for charity and hospitality in numerous early modern Spanish works, for instance: Diego de Estella (1524–1578), *Tratado de la Vanidad del Mundo* (Toledo 1562); Alfonso de Cabrera (1549–1598), *Sermones*; José Ortiz Cantero, *Directorio Catequístico* (1766, 253), etc.

⁶⁷ Luke 24: 13–17.

⁶⁸ See the cases of, for example, Villalba del Rey (Cuenca), seventeenth century, San Carlos del Valle, c. 1640, and Cristo de Tembleque, 1689, in Christian, *Religiosidad local*, 236, 238, 338–39. For New Castile, this pattern is absent in the shrine stories reported in the *Relaciones Topográficas* of 1575–1580.

⁶⁹ For Aragon, the accounts in Faci, *Aragón*, of the Christ of Calatorao; a broken crucifix put together by a mysterious pilgrim in Gelsa; the Santo Crucifijo de los Milagros in the cathedral of Barbastro, made by two pilgrims; in Boltaña the Crucifix in

the *iglesia colegial*, made by two foreign pilgrims; in Alcolea, a crucifix made by a single pilgrim; and in Alcorisa, an image of San Sebastian made by a pilgrim during the plague. For elsewhere, Na. Sra. de Desamparados (Valencia) image made by three youths, Villafañe, *Compendio histórico*, 192–93; Na. Sra. del Coro (Lleida, Clarisas) made by foreigners, Sánchez Pérez, *El culto mariano*, 141–42; Na. Sra. de las Nieves, Hondon (Alicante), two or three pilgrims work for three day's *ibid.*, 290; Na. Sra. de las Maravillas, Pamplona, stranger left for monk July 16, 1655, Sánchez Pérez, *El culto mariano*, 250–51; Na. Sra. de la Luz, Lucena (Córdoba) two youths leave and disappear, *ibid.*, 357–58, Na. Sra. del Tránsito, Zamora, two Santiago pilgrims work for two days, late sixteenth century, *ibid.*, 409–10. For Mexico, William Taylor, personal communication.

⁷⁰ Blacker, "Folklore of the Stranger," 165.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 163.

⁷² Prof. Éva Pócs kindly identifies examples in the *Catalogue of Hungarian Folktales* as AaTh 750A and 750B (MNK 750A Ix, MNK 750B Ix). And François Delpéch, "Devine qui vient," 182, points to similar tales in Spain and the Motif K 1811 (Gods or Saints in disguise visit mortals) (I thank José Manuel Pedrosa for this reference).

⁷³ Martínez, *Tradiciones y costumbres*, 213–14. Salud Toledano Serrano, by telephone with Pascual Martínez, Nov. 9 2010; her grandmother kept Toribia's *torta* for use in evil eye prevention pouches.

⁷⁴ Other apparition stories in Spain contain episodes of the Saint or Mary punishing the seer for not obeying instructions or fulfilling vows, as at Santa Gadea del Cid (1399), where the visionary boy was beaten by monks on Mary's orders, Ecija (1436), where Saint Paul made the seer boy mute, and El Miracle (1458), where the seer boys died of the plague as a sign of what would happen to all infants, and at Cubas (1449), Jafre (1460), and El Torn (1483), where towns were threatened with the plague if they

did not obey. Christian, *Apariciones*, passim. For folklore of towns punished, Maurer, "German Sunken City Legends," and Lacarra, "El Camino de Santiago en la literatura." I thank José Manuel Pedrosa for these references as well.

⁷⁵ Blacker, "Folklore of the Stranger," 166.

⁷⁶ For Christ and the twelve apostles, Delpech, "Devine qui vient"; for twentieth-century begging, Gaya Nuño, *Tratado de mendicidad*.

Chapter 2

¹ An earlier version of the first part of this paper appeared as "Images as Beings" in the exhibition catalogue *Sacred Spain. Art and Belief in the Spanish World*, ed. Ronda Kasl, whose help and that of Suso Mourelo in locating illustrations I most gratefully acknowledge.

² For this use of "special" I have been influenced by Ann Taves in conversations and her *Religious Experience Reconsidered*.

³ For general considerations on the miraculousness of images, Trexler, "Being and Non-Being," Vauchez, "Les images saintes," Schmitt, *Le Corps des images*.

⁴ Christian, *Apariciones*; for Guadalupe, Crémoux, *Pèlerinages et miracles*.

⁵ Freedberg, *Power*, 283–316; for a late medieval spate of Eucharistic miracles in Germany, see Bynum, *Wonderful Blood*, and Merback, "Channels of Grace."

⁶ García Avilés "Imágenes 'vivientes'"; for Italy, Jansen, "Miraculous Crucifixes," and Camille, *Gothic Idol*, 220–24, 232–36.

⁷ The concentration in Old and New Castile and Catalonia of most of the examples in this paper should not be taken as an indication of the real geographical distribution of this kind of event, but more likely as an indication of which ones made it into print (hence a bias toward Madrid and Barcelona and their hinterlands) and thus came to my notice. The list in Christian, *Religiosidad local*, 237,

337–39, is perforce haphazard, and as a general rule the more one looks the more one finds. Events with political implications (here those of Nuévalos, Tobed Llers, Riudarenas, Olot, Orán, Murcia, Traíd) and those involving images or devotions closely associated with religious orders are also more likely to be publicized (here Munébrega for the Jesuits, and Traíd, for the Franciscans).

⁸ Christian, “Provoked Religious Weeping”; Veratelli, “Les Émotions en images”; Webster, *Art and Ritual*; Webster, “Shameless Beauty”; Llompart “Procesión del Encuentro”; Español, “Descendimientos hispanos”; and for present-day eye contact between images and people, Pasqualino, “Quand les yeux.” For people as saints and vice versa in contemporary festivals, many of them with early modern roots, see Christian, “Sobrenaturales, humanos, animales.”

⁹ Wriothlesley and Herald, *Chronicle*, 1:74, 90, 152; for Hales, see also 76.

¹⁰ Alonso Fernández de Madrigal, *Confessional*, under Primer Mandamiento: “por ende quando toman especial deuocion mas con vna ymagen que con otra pecan”; “y dizen que lloran las ymages y que echan lagrimas muy dulces y ello es agua y miel que por detras les echan; lo qual seria assaz de consentir en el tiempo que a los ydolos adoraúan. E si estos que esto leuantan no hiziessen en ello otro mal: sino que sacassen el dinero avnque es cosa de mal exenplo: empero encima del lo que es lo peor fazen a la gente necia ydolatrar: y a los tales: no solamente se deuia de dar gran castigo mas la tierra no los deuia sufrir.” See also Alemán, *Antonio de Padua*, fol. 78v.

¹¹ Valera, *Los dos tratados*, 326: “¡Oh zeguedad ignorante i ignoranzia ziega! ¿Cuántas imájines han hablado? ¿Cuántas han sudado, i aun gotas de sangre? Al cruzifijo de Burgos, cree la jente ignorante, que le creze la barba i los cabellos, i aun las uñas.” For the Christ of Burgos and the important antecedent of the Christ of Beirut, see Pereda, *Imágenes de la discordia*, 132–38.

¹² The Council of Trent is mentioned explicitly in the Medina

de Rioseco case below; see also Prieto, *Probanza*; for the 1617 retrospective hearing on the 1490 apparitions of the Virgin in Escalona (Segovia), see Christian, *Apariciones*, 142–50; and for the elaborate hearings about the relics of the Sacromonte, 1595–1600, Harris, *From Muslim to Christian*; for Arjona, 1628–46, see Olds, “The ‘False Chronicles’.”

¹³ The acts of two notaries are reproduced photographically and transcribed in Garcías Palou, *El Santo Cristo de Alcadia*.

¹⁴ “Instrumento Público, que se formó en la averiguación del prodigio que se vio, de sudar sangre y agua, la sagrada Imagen del Santo Cristo de la villa de Igualada,” in Díaz i Carbonell, *El Sant Crist*, 213–40. See also Colomer, *Historia*.

¹⁵ Muñoz Fernández, “Las cofradías”; and Flynn, “Baroque Piety.”

¹⁶ Díaz i Carbonell, *El Sant Crist*, 233: “que estava lo Cristo ab gran treball y agonía, com aquelles personas que sels acosta la hora de la mort, y estant pera donar la anima a nostre Senyor, y apuntant ja un mudor per tot lo cos, aprés me aparegué que resplandia y rellentaba per tota la figura.”

¹⁷ Ibid., 216: “que era la hora que Cristo espirá, per veurer si la dita Figura faria altres senyals.”

¹⁸ Ibid., 214: “tenir ab major veneració y acato del que fins vui es tinguda; y per tots los Feels Cristians ser venerada y reverenciada”; “burlarse han los enemigos de la Santa Fé Católica, y confirmarse han en su damnable error.”

¹⁹ Ibid., 223: “y era Figura molt fosca, y tota plena de picaduras de moscas; y ara está blanca com si fos eixida de ma de Mestre y molt trasmutada del que ans apareixia.”

²⁰ Gila Medina, *Cabra*, 58–59.

²¹ “Informacion y processo original hecho por el doctor don Miguel Sanctos de San Pedro Arcidiano del Alcor en la sancta yglesia de Palencia Inquisidor Apostolico de Aragon, con comision del señor Obispo de Palencia, sobre el milagro succedido a 8 de Junio, de 1602 en la villa de Medina de Rioseco en la iglesia

de Sancta Maria en un sancto crucifixo que sudo con grande Admiracion del pueblo y la sentencia difinitiva en que se declara el milagro dado por el señor Obispo don Martin Axpe y Sierra.” MS, Archivo Municipal de Medina de Rioseco, legajo 5. Testimony of Hermano Seuastian de la Conceçion de la orden de nuestra señora del carmen descalços extramuros, frayle lego, fols. 269r–v, also fols. 81r–v: “el mismo rostro e seueridad del y en la misma figura de que antes estaua . . . le pareçio que no hera el mismo que auia uisto en la yglesia ora y medio auia porque yua muy disfigurado y los cauellos de la uarua muy espeluçados y su precioso rostro mas leuantado.”

²² Ibid., fol. 115v, Licenciado Andres Ramos, racionero en la sancta iglesia de Palencia, July 18, 1602: “los testigos examinados en esta causa no han de ser admittidos por ser como son todos vezinos de la dicha villa de medina de rioseco y como apasionados an dicho sus dichos por engrandezer su pueblo pensando de enriquezer la hermita donde esta la imaxen del dicho crucifixo con las limosnas y dadiuas que comunmente offrezzen los fieles deuotos que la vesitaren.” However plausible and revealing, these were pro forma objections in what seems to have been a pro forma proceeding, and Ramos immediately dropped his objections after Merino responded.

²³ Ibid., fols. 117v–118r, Hernando Merino, procurador en la audiencia episcopal, July 20, 1602: “avnque confieso que la fee esta confirmada en estos reynos, es tanta nuestra tiuieza en acudir a las cosas de el seruicio de dios y culto diuino que algunas veces son necessarios milagros y nuestro señor vemos que los obra cada dia para que aya mayor deuocion y con fervor acudamos todos a venerar y respetar las sanctas ymages y por estos medios suele nuestro señor atraer los pueblos pues en semejantes casos vemos concurrir a porfia a visitar semejantes ymagenes por quien nuestro señor obra sus milagros, no solo la gente toda de los lugares donde suçeden / 118r / sino de los demas comarcas y de toda la tierra por donde se publica y dibulga la fama de el tal

milagro y con semejantes casos y successos sobrenaturales aunque todas las ymagenes por lo que representan se an de tener estimar y reuerenciar con mucho respecto, pero particularmente por las que nuestro señor semejantes milagros obra se tienen y respectan con mucho mas deuocion, y en las capillas donde se tienen se hazen muchos sacrificios se diçen misas y sermones y se hazen oraçiones convocanse y juntanse mui de ordinario los pueblos en tales yglesias y casas de oraçion, danse limosnas y hazense otras obras pias y sanctas con que nuestro señor es alauado y seruido.”

²⁴ Ibid., fols. 248r–v, Bishop Martín de Axpe y Sierra: “el sudor y gotas de agua que . . . se vieron clara y patentemente por todo el cuerpo del dicho sancto crucifixo y limpiandolo los saçerdotes con vnos corporales se vmedeçian y bolbian luego a rebenir y naçer alli mismo otras gotas de agua y que aunque menearon y mudaron el sancto crucifijo, no se cayan las dichas gotas de agua y sudor, que se beian pendientes en el, y ansimismo verse el rostro del dicho cristo como afligido congoxado y demudado con admiracion y espanto de todos los que lo vieron y differente de lo que antes deste casso se vio y despues se a visto su rostro. El dicho casso deberse tener por milagro que nuestro señor jhesucristo fue seruido de hazer y obrar en su sancta ymagen y figura para bien de los fieles cristianos. . . . todos fieles cristianos de nuestro obispado que de aqui en adelante lo beneran y tengan por tal milagro, y que se escriba y ponga en vna tabla en parte y lugar que este de manifesto para que el pueblo se exorta a buen viuir y a servir y agradar en todas sus açiones a nuestro buen dios y señor y a mayor culto y beneracion de su sancta ymagen.”

²⁵ For instance, Spaniards could read of a crucifix in a village in Sardinia, Galtelli, that started sweating and bleeding on the days leading up to its feast on May 3, 1612. The face allegedly looked very tortured, and when curtain was drawn back so people could sing it a Miserere, many drops of blood fell, and “the church was filled with lamenting, copious tears were wept, all fearful of some chastisement well deserved because of sins and offenses to

his Divine Majesty” (se llenò la Iglesia de llanto, y se derramaron copiosas lagrimas, temiendose todos de algun castigo, bien merecido por los pecados, y ofensas hechas à su Diuina Magestad). In the subsequent investigation, people said that the crucifix had been noticed in the past to change expressions, whether happy, favorable, sad, afflicted, or angry, and at times the very fabric of the image seemed to be transformed. “Some priests testify that sometimes they have found one of the thighs soft and tractable, as if it were real flesh and bones, causing in them and those present great wonder,” *Devocion y milagros*. For the investigation of the sweating/weeping of an image of the Virgin of Copacabana in Lima, 1591, see Amino, “Las lágrimas.” Christoval de los Santos, *Tesoro del Cielo*, 1:138–39, mentions the sweating of a crucifix in 1621 in Minas de Ixmiquilpan, Mexico. The first published news of this sweating in Spain came in 1649. See Taylor, “Two Shrines” and Rubial García, “Imágenes y ermitaños,” 230–35. For Goa, in 1636, Diego de Santa Ana, *Milagroso portento*. For Győr, Mitchell, “Fiction,” and the pious version in Jordánszky, *Magyar Országban*, 56–57.

²⁶ *Relacion de algvnos*, 4: “sudò hazia la parte derecha, debaxo del braço, por espacio de 4. horas, y el sudor era un licor extraordinario, que ni bien era agua (aunque lo parecia en el color) ni bien azeyte, ni otro licor que coriesse, sino que se yua hinchando como vnas gotas gruessas, y si lo enxugauan, luego boluia a manar el mismo licor, y se empaparon dos lienços.”

²⁷ *Relacion segvnda de algvnos*, 2: “Que milagros puede hazer vna tabla? y arrodillandose delante de vn gran tablon, que auia muchos dias que estaua arrimado a la pared, y no se podia mouer facilmente: dixo en menosprecio de la imagen del Santo. Tabla haz milagros: Al punto se le cayò la tabla en la cabeça, y dandole vn gran golpe, le descalabrò muy bien, y la herida del cuerpo fue la salud de su alma, que este castigo a esso endereçaron Dios y san Ignacio: si bien no teniendose el blasfemo por seguro de la Inquisicion, se huyò de Calatayud, donde personas abonadas son testigos que estan hoy en Madrid.”

²⁸ Andrade, *Veneración*, 348–66.

²⁹ Ibid., 224–26.

³⁰ Cunill i Fontfreda, *El Sant Crist*, 40–67, at 52: “que lo Christo del Hospital avia plorat sanch y aygua . . . y que a nit . . . avia sentit tocar la campana del hospital dos vegades.”

³¹ Antón Díaz, age fifty-four, April 9, 1640, fols. 125v–28r, in “Informacion fecha en virtud de comision de los Señores del Consejo de Su Alteza el Señor Cardenal Ynfante, en razon del Sudor de diez y siete dias que hizo en este villa del Bonillo el SANTO CRISTO DE LOS MILAGROS, el año de 1640 el dia quatro del mes de marzo de dicho año = Y asimismo el Milagro que a 21 de Abril de dicho año ejecuto con Christival Chilleron haviendole cogido los novillos.” This is a notarized copy in the Libro de Cofradia made February 19, 1794, from the copy made May 23, 1641, of the document in Toledo. I saw it in the parish archive.

³² The Augustinian friar was Miguel Garcés de la Cañada. Ldo. Juan Baptista Davia, age about seventy, April 14, 1640, *ibid.*, fol. 140v: “la sudor bullia como la de un huebo que ponen asar en la lumbre,” reporting what Garcés told him. This image was used by several observers, including Díaz himself.

³³ Davia, April 14, 1640, *ibid.*, fol. 140r: “como ha sucedido en otras ocasiones muchas.”

³⁴ Pedro Morcillo, age sixty-four, April 18, 1640, *ibid.*, fol. 156v: “como cuando un hombre viene caluroso y cansado.”

³⁵ Diego Ortiz, infantry captain, *regidor*, familiar of the Holy Office, age forty-two, May 6, 1640, *ibid.*, fol. 175r: “como una lentejuela de plata, que resplandecía.”

³⁶ Luis Calvache Pinero, doctor, age seventy, April 15, 1640, *ibid.*, fol. 150r: “that odor was not natural, for it was not water of orange blossom, violets, carnations, angels, amber, musk, civet, calamite storax, lozenges, nor anything that this witness knows about” (y que aquel olor no era de cosa natural, porque ni era de agua de Azar, ni de Violetas, ni de Claveles, ni de Angeles, ni de Ambar, ni

de Amizcle, ni de Algalia, ni de Estoraque calamita, ni de pastillas, y por fin dixo, que ni de otra cosa que este testigo alcanza). One witness (fol. 158v) said it was like jasmine flower, but more delicate (*suave*).

³⁷ Christoval Chilleron, *labrador*, age forty-four, April 15, 1640, *ibid.*, fols. 148v–149r.

³⁸ Juan de la Plaza, painter, age twenty-seven, April 22, 1640, *ibid.*, fol. 178v: “es cosa sobrenatural y milagrosa, y este testigo lo tiene por tal, y la pintura de ella porque es de las mas primas y superiores, que ha visto su vida, tanto que provoca a rreberencia, y debocion grande aquiel [sic] lo vè, y en todas las ocasiones que este testigo le ha visto se le han escarmenado los cavellos, y dado temor, porque la Caveza es de la mayor primor y vivez [sic], que ay en el arte de pintura.”

³⁹ For sweating, in 1641, of a Veronica in Baños de la Encina (Jaén) and a painting of the Cristo de Cabra in Linares (Jaén) during Jesuit missions, see “Copia de una carta, que el Padre Marcos de Verrio aviendo vuelto de una larga mission escrivio desde Jaen a un religioso amigo residente en Madrid, de 24 de De. de 1641,” BRAH 9.336 folios 200rv, and “Traslado de una relacion que se escribio desde Baños al Señor Cardenal Obispo de Jaen por el doctor Melchor de Blanca Prior de aquella iglesia y el Padre Pedro de Fontiberos del sudor extraordinario de la santa Beronica en la Villa de Baños estando en mission los padres Marcos de Verrio y dicho Padre Fontiberos sacada puntualmente de la juridica que para su eminencia se hiço con mas de cien testigos,” *ibid.*, 343r–345v. I am grateful to Katrina Olds for this reference and transcription.

⁴⁰ Most of what we know of the events comes from a book about it, published fifty years later by a Trinitarian who was a native son, which includes the final judgment and verbatim excerpts from the hearing, see Christoval de los Santos, *Tesoro del Cielo*.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 1:38–39. The main Veronica shrines in Spain were in Jaén and Alicante; two other Veronica images that became active

were in Honrubia (Cuenca) sometime in the 1630s (to the *beata* Ana García Rubio and others, see Panes, *Chronica*, 430–36) and in Sacedón (Guadalajara), in 1689, where an investigation was held after a Veronica was discovered on a wall and worked miracles; see Corona, *Historia de la maravillosa aparición*.

⁴² Christoval de los Santos, *Tesoro del Cielo*, 1:42, the Dominican Miguel Conde: “y que dicho Rostro de nuestro Señor Jesu-Christo estava encendido, y encarnado, como de vna persona que està muy fatigada, y cansada, y que le pareciò, que algunas vezes hazia mudanças el Rostro, como impelido de alguna congoja Interior, y los ojos sumamente tristes, los labios belfos.” See also in De Gayangos, *Cartas de Jesuitas*, a letter dated April 26, 1644, to Seville, quoting an April 24 letter from the rector of Villarejo de Fuentes to Madrid, *Memorial Histórico Español* 17, 470–71.

⁴³ Christoval de los Santos, *Tesoro del Cielo*, 1:22–23.

⁴⁴ Public penance that provoked public weeping served as demonstrations to God that the town as a collective being was repentant, see Christian, “Provoked Religious Weeping.”

⁴⁵ Christoval de los Santos, *Tesoro del Cielo*, 2:122: “lo tenían por milagro, y sin sospecha de causa natural, que en ello interviniese, segun lo que la fragilidad, y juizio humano puede alcançar à entender, y juzgar. Y por este razon, ser digno de ponerse desde luego en mas veneracion de la que aora està en dicho cuadro.” This outcome resembled the outcome of a beatification process, which also allowed a greater degree of veneration of a person considered blessed.

⁴⁶ Sebastian Gonzalez, Madrid, to Rafael Peyreira, Seville, in De Gayangos, *Cartas de Jesuitas*, MHE 18, 299, letter May 15, 1646, “Dios está muy enojado”; “A un padre de este Colegio dijo la condesa de Puñoenrostro, que en un pueblo suyo que se llama Alcobendas habia allí sudado un Cristo, y que habiéndole limpiado algunas veces el sudor el cura, habia de nuevo vuelto à sudar. ¡Quiera Dios mejorar estos presagios!”

⁴⁷ The following account is based on “Infformacion de la

milagrossa Imagen del Sto. Christo de la Columna cuya sta efigie esta en esta Igleſſia Parrochial de ſeñor ſan Pedro de eſta Villa de Alcouendas año de mill y ſeiscientos y quarenta y ſeis,” in the parish archive of San Pedro Apostol, 1646. It conſiſts of 98 folios. There is alſo another, 243-page tranſcript, made in 1794, and a record book of the alms to the image with entries for 1646, and the period 1651 to 1709.

⁴⁸ “Infformacion,” fols. 54v, 57r, Francisco de Moscoso (“ex-alcalde de los nobles”): “como ſuele ſeçederze.”

⁴⁹ Ibid., fols. 11v, 33v, 36v, 40r

⁵⁰ Ibid., fols. 19r, 26v, 54v, and paſſim: “temor,” “ternura,” “admiracion,” “contento,” “pura devocion” and “reuerençia.”

⁵¹ Several of the male witneſſes were town notables (“thoſe paid attention to”), and four were ſeaſonal workers, including two from a town next to Oſa de la Vega; the age of the male witneſſes ranged from twenty-two to ſixty-ſeven, of the women, from twenty-two to fifty.

⁵² Ibid., fol. 66v: “en tiempos tan calamitosos.”

⁵³ Díaz i Carbonell, *El Sant Crist*, 228: “á cercar algun home perque vehes, pera que a noſaltres nons he creurian.”

⁵⁴ Chriſtian, *Religioſidad local*, 219–49. As Richard Trexler has pointed out (in “Habiller et déſhabiller”), Spain’s Chriſt images were largely undreſſed, and moſt of them did not have detachable clothing. In conſtrast, Marian images were heavily dreſſed (Cea Gutiérrez, *Religioſidad popular*; Albert-Llorca, *Vierges miraculeuſes*) and humors or tranſformation had to be concentrated on the face or hands.

⁵⁵ In 1520, in Cocentina; ſee text of the original acts by Luis Juan de Alzamora and the retroſpective teſtimony of ſix witneſſes on December 9, 1605, in Arques Jover, *Breve Hiſtoria*, 53–95. For 1525 Nuévalos, Archivo Hiſtórico Nacional, Madrid (hereafter AHN), Códice 829B Colegiata del Sto. Sepulcro de Calatayud, Apeo del archivo, Cajon de las eſcrituras de la encomienda de Nuebalos no. 4 (fol. 78r) and no. 30 (fol. 89v). For Tobed, ſee

documents in *Historia del antiguo*, 60–68, and testimony boards in the church; AHN Ordenes Militares Sto Sepulcro Sellos Caja 34, no. 11, February 28, 1400, Martin I of Aragon gives image painted by Saint Luke to Tobed church; and AHN Códice 829B (see above), Cajon de privilegios reales (fol. 25r), for donation of painting; and no. 68 (fol. 242v) for sweat of images. On this kind of image, see Crispí i Cantón, “La verònica,” 1996.

⁵⁶ Pulido Serrano, *Injurias a Cristo*, 143–47.

⁵⁷ For 1640 Llers, see Camós, *Jardín de María*, 166–68, and Pellicer, *Avisos*, August 7, 1640. For Riudarenes, see Elliot, *Revolt of the Catalans*, 426, see also 420, 427, 444–45; and for Olot, see Camós, *Jardín de María*, 151–53, citing notarial act.

⁵⁸ In 1675, a painting of Our Lady of the Rosary sweating, and in 1677, exacerbated by famine and plague, images of Mary, Christ, Saint Anthony of Padua, and Saint Joseph sweating in monasteries and private houses. Antonio de Santa María, *Hispania Triunfante*, chap. 54, 520–22, cited in Christoval de los Santos, *Tesoro del Cielo*, 163–65.

⁵⁹ Cardinal Luis Antonio de Belluga’s *Carta pastoral* of August 18, 1706, printed in Murcia, Granada, Pamplona, Seville, and Naples, the *Gazeta de Murcia*, August 24, 1706, 87–88, and Belluga’s published correspondence described a plaster bust of the Sorrowful Mother in a house near Murcia whose weeping on August 8–9, 1706, he witnessed, as had been leading troops in battle a short distance away. Belluga had testimony taken from twenty-four witnesses on August 11 and related the weeping to profanations by British troops in Alicante.

⁶⁰ The battles were at Brihuega and Villaviciosa. Various *relaciones*, including BNM VE 708–65, 818–106, BNM V 56–40, 121–26; Arbiol, *Sudor milagroso*, by which he gives the testimony; and Fray Martín Rosillo (the Franciscan from Molina de Aragón who made the enquiry), *Del admirable sudor de una imagen de San Francisco en tiempo de guerra* (Zaragoza, 1712), which I have not seen, cited in Sanz y Díaz, “Traíd y el cuadro,” *Diario de Cuenca*, Aug. 31, 1982, 9.

⁶¹ *Relacion verdadera*, 1: “especialmente se deve poner cuydado en sudores de Imagenes; pues se han experimentado muchos de vano artificio, causados, ù de la ciega aficion que tienen à la Imagen por darle mas culto, ù de la precipitada codicia de Santeros, y Sacristanes, que no quieren comer pan de su sudor, como Adan, sino sustentarse à costa de el sudor de la Imagen.”

⁶² See Vidal, “Miracles, Science, and Testimony,” and its excellent bibliography.

⁶³ As the seventeenth century progressed, brotherhoods in Seville tended to hire their flagellants; see Sánchez Herrero, *La Semana Santa*, 135, 145, 167–69. Flagellation was forbidden altogether in the Real Cédula [Royal edict] of February 20, 1777.

⁶⁴ In Ávila, in 1594, the alabaster statue held to be Saint Segundo had a liquid like sweat on its face about the time the image was to be taken from the brotherhood chapel and placed in the cathedral. Some said the sweat appeared because the saint did not want to be moved, others, because the saint was glad to be moved. Still others said the sweat was liquid left over from when the face was washed, which picked up the light from candles on the altar. The diocesan official sent by the bishop to look into the matter decided “there was nothing of substance.” Antonio Cianca, *Historia de la vida, invención, milagros y traslación de San Segundo* (Madrid: Luys Sanchez, 1595), facsimile ed., 2 vols. (Ávila: Institución Gran Duque de Alba, 1993), 2:23r–23v, cited in Cátedra, *Un santo para una ciudad*, 61–62: “no auía cosa de sustancia.”

⁶⁵ Christian, “Francisco Martínez,” 103: “Y que le dixo que tan cierto seria como lo era que un Santo Christo que llebaba al pecho estaba sudando sangre. Con lo que le commobio y a no arrimarse a la pared del cortijo ubiera caído.”

⁶⁶ Ibid, 104–105, “metia el santo christo en agua, o se le hechaba, y aciendose sangre en un dedo se la pegaba y de esta calidad lo mostraba a dichos compañeros dandoles a entender sudaba sangre y agua.”

⁶⁷ Ibid, 107, “tomar el oficio de olgazán, y comer e beuer

alegremente”; “poco inclinado al trauajo, y querer sin el, comer, y pasar con conveniencia la vida.”

⁶⁸ Feijóo, *Teatro Crítico*, 3: sixth discourse, “Milagros Supuestos”: “¡Quántos llantos, ò sudores mysteriosos de sagradas estatuas corrieron en varios Países que no tuvieron mas existencia que las que les dio un engañoso viso, ò una imaginacion fanática! En los primeros años de este siglo se proclamó tanto el sudor de un Crucifixo, no como término, sino como symptoma de la enfermedad que entonces padecia España, que pasó à los Reynos estraños la noticia como muy verdadera, siendo fabulosa.”

⁶⁹ Montuno Morente, *Nuestra Señora de la Capilla*, 394.

⁷⁰ *Instrumentos auténticos*.

⁷¹ See the excellent study of Cattaneo, *Gli Occhi di Maria*.

⁷² Emérta Lara and Esperanza Aparicio Buendía, interview by author, October 24, 1976, El Bonillo, tape recording, about vision in jail in Hellín.

⁷³ In Miguelturra (Ciudad Real). Other images with certified activations have been eclipsed by competing devotions who worked their own miracles. If the Christ at the Column upstaged Our Lady of the Peace in the drought of 1646, in 1677, Our Lady of the Peace regained her preeminence by multiplying the wine in an Alcobendas house, and today it is her feast, not that of the Christ or its sweating, that is celebrated.

⁷⁴ Aulnoy, *Travels into Spain*, 153.

⁷⁵ Portús, “Holy Depicting the Holy.”

⁷⁶ I concur with Vauchez, “Introduction,” 10: “N’importe quelle image, religieuse ou non, peut en effet être investie d’un pouvoir inhérent qui, à un certain moment, se révèle au grand jour à l’occasion d’une vision, d’une animation ou de miracles.”

⁷⁷ Corteguera, “Talking Images.”

⁷⁸ Nalle, “Private Devotion, Personal Space”; Kasl, “Delightful Adornments”; and for Mexico, Rubial, *Profetisas y solitarios*, 124–35.

⁷⁹ For the Christ of the Column of Monlora in the illustrations, Hebrera y Emir, *Descripción*, and *Historia de Monlora*.

⁸⁰ Christian and Krasznai, “Christ of Limpas and the Passion of Hungary.”

⁸¹ See Christian, *Moving Crucifixes*; in Navarra, the Christs of Piedramillera (starting May 11, 1920), Berbinzana (starting May 22, 1920 [Archivo Diocesano de Pamplona, Berbinzana, 1920 no. 9. I thank Santiago Martínez Magdalena for this reference]) and Mañeru (by May 28, 1920).

⁸² To this day many of the people of the towns of Sant Quirze de Besora and Montesquiu (Barcelona) believe that one of the textile mills nearby had an articulated crucifix in an adjacent chapel, which, when workers asked the owner for an increase in salary, would be made to shake its head or nod (personal conversations, Montesquiu 2009, Anglada, *Història del poble de Montesquiu*, 120–28).

⁸³ The Templemore events have not been seriously studied. I have consulted, among other newspapers, the *Tipperary Star*, the *Irish Independent*, the *Nenagh Guardian*, the *Anglo-Celt*, and the *Meath Chronicle*.

⁸⁴ Christian, *Visionaries*, 95, 155, 159, 200, 208, 445.

⁸⁵ As far as I know, there has been no scholarly work on her sect, which was periodically, and notoriously, in the news. See Gilles Lameire, *La Vierge en pleurs*.

⁸⁶ There is an abundant bibliography: apologetic, like Bombenger, *Le Sacré-Coeur de Mirebeau-en-Poitou* and Association, *Témoignages*, and Grabinski, *Wunder*, 140–200; estoteric, like Birven, *Abbe Vachère*, who believed Vachère was a magician; and enquiring, like Feilding, “The Case of Abbé Vachère,” but no critical study.

⁸⁷ See Garlaschelli, “Sangue, sudore e lacrime.”

⁸⁸ Badame, *La Virgen de las Lágrimas*.

⁸⁹ Interview with the parish priest, Foz, Aug 12, 1977.

⁹⁰ *Ofensiva* (Cuenca) articles by Bort Carbó Oct. 11 to Nov. 10, 1959, *Ya* Nov. 5 and 7, 1959; Querol in *Sábado Gráfico* Oct. 24, 1959, and Menéndez-Chacón in *Blanco y Negro*, Oct. 24, 1958. The weeping was filmed by Agustín Ontalvo Carreño. The lithograph wept daily from Sept 18 to Oct. 9, especially on Fridays, then Nov.

4, Nov. 6, Nov. 7 and possibly thereafter. Rvdo. Emilio Hortelano, interview, July 21, 1977.

⁹¹ I talked to many of the people involved and three members of the commission in July 1977. They and much of Spain's clergy were influenced by Carlos María Staehlin's critical book, *Apariciones*.

⁹² For the skeptical clergy, see Lévêque, *Mon curé chez les visionnaires*, 18.

⁹³ The X-ray, published in *Paris Match*, Dec. 25, 1954, 64–67, showed the image was fashioned over what was originally a crucifix, and this shadow Christ below Saint Anne was considered a miraculous sign.

⁹⁴ For example, Pichon, "Miracle ou supercherie?" See also Thomassin, "Le faux miracle."

⁹⁵ Salvadé and Bronté, "Le faux miracle," *France-Dimanche*, Feb. 2 to March 2, 1961, all on page 8. See also Arnal, *Mystères et Merveilles*, 136–72, using, somewhat imaginatively, police records.

⁹⁶ Éparvier and Hérissée, *Le Dossier des miracles*, 195.

⁹⁷ Arnal, *Mystères et Merveilles*, 169–70.

⁹⁸ Garlaschelli, "Sangue, sudore e lacrima," Warner, "Blood and Tears." For apologetic accounts of the many such events, see the works of Piero Mantero, including his *Foto "Soprannaturali"* and other publications of Edizioni Segno, Udine, along with the magazine *Segno*.

⁹⁹ Vázquez and Marquardt, "Globalizing the Rainbow Madonna."

¹⁰⁰ Wojcik, "Polaroids from Heaven," and "Spirits, Apparitions and Traditions"; Bitel and Gainer, "Looking the Wrong Way." At Ezquioga (1931–1934) photographs and films came to be critical evidence for and against the visions. Eventually, the bishop demanded the surrender of all photos of the seers, a testimony to the images' effectiveness. Christian, *Visionaries*, 112, 151, 274–75, Christian, "L'Oeil de l'esprit."

¹⁰¹ See the works of the chemist Garlaschelli <http://www.luigigarlaschelli.it/Altrepubblicazioni>.

¹⁰² See Gross, *The Dream of the Moving Image*.

Chapter 3

¹ The following assisted me with translations of texts, sources or information on given images: Igor Bogdanovic, Marrie Bot, Adrienne Dömötör, Michel Frizot, Helmfried Luers and Maria Vivod. Unless otherwise specified, all postcards and photographs form part of the collection of the author. The following website of Helmfried Luers is useful for identification of German and Austrian postcard logos and initials: The Postcard Album; Postcard Printer and Publisher Research http://tpa-project.info/body_index.html. This chapter is both an idea and a collection that illustrates it. My interest in postcards as combinations of pictures and messages was long ago stimulated by the film by Lynne Cohen and Andrew Lugg, *Front and Back*.

² Alberti, *On Painting*, 60. I am indebted to Nathaniel Jones for this reference.

³ Mora i Puyal, "El racó de la memòria," cited by permission.

⁴ Lázare Boix, "Colecciones: reflexiones antropológicas," cited by permission

⁵ Kron, *Home-Psych*, 194, in Brucato, "Il valore antropologico delle cose," 5, cited by permission.

⁶ The postcard originated in Austria in 1869 and had spread through the Western world by 1874. Illustrated cards were commercialized in Germany starting in 1875 and in France, starting in 1887, intensified by the World Fairs of 1889 and 1900 in Paris and 1893 in Chicago. Estimates for French production for the year 1907 range from 300 to 600 million cards. For an overview, Ripert and Frère, *La carte postale*, 11–40. While print runs for individual cards in France might have averaged 10,000 before the war, it was not unusual during the war for them to be 100,000 (Huss, *Histoires*, 72). See also Baranowska, "The Mass-Produced Postcard," and Phillips, *We Are the People*.

⁷ These figures are climbing rapidly, representing an increase of 30% for Delcampe, and 10% for TodoColeccion in the past six months.

- ⁸ Christian, "L'Oeil de l'esprit."
- ⁹ Duchenne, *Mécanisme*, 137–40.
- ¹⁰ Laurentin, *Vrai visage*, 1:8. Also Vircondelet, *Bernadette*.
- ¹¹ Alberti, *On Painting*, 60.
- ¹² Stoichita, *Visionary Experience*. See also Petersson, *Art of Ecstasy*.
- ¹³ For the symbolic role of Jeanne d'Arc in this period and during the war, Warner, *Joan of Arc*, 249–68, Becker, *War and Faith*, 79–82. For the dramatic evolution of her figure previously, Heimann, *Joan of Arc*.
- ¹⁴ I thank Daniel Wojcik for help on terminology and sources.
- ¹⁵ For nineteenth-century composite images, Henisch, *Photographic Experience*, 43–48, 281, 355–58, 383–88.
- ¹⁶ Laurentin, *Vrai visage*, 2:74–75.
- ¹⁷ Chéroux, "Ghost dialectics," 46.
- ¹⁸ Nelli, "Les Visions"; Courrieu, "Les Étranges visions"; Bigou, "Les Apparitions"; "French villagers report apparition" (I thank Deirdre de la Cruz for supplying the article); "Les Manifestations d'Alzonne"; "Notre Courrier: Alzonne et Conques"; J. R., "Les Visionnaires d'Alzonne."
- ¹⁹ Gonne, *Letters*, 325–26. She and Yeats went back to France in 1914 to Mirebeau to see the bleeding images of Abbé Vachère, who told Yeats of the Sacred Heart's mission for him, Foster, *Yeats: A Life*, 1:517–18.
- ²⁰ Nelli, "Les Visions."
- ²¹ Niccoli, *Prophecy and People*, 61–88.
- ²² Seven billion postcards were sent in Germany in World War I (Alzheimer, *Glaubenssache Krieg*, 14). For the Netherlands, van Lith, *Ik denk altijd aan jou*; for France, Huss, *Histoires*, and Pairault, *Images des Poilus*; for Italy, Sturani, *Donna del soldato*.
- ²³ Huss, *Histoires*, 186–92.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, 139–41.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, 142–48.
- ²⁶ "Au Général Joffre," A. Noyer, Paris, "Galerie Patriotique" N° 201, by B. Borione, Dec. 1914. Collection of author.

²⁷ Jonas, *Tragic Tale*; Ferchaud, *Notes autobiographiques*; for background, Thurston, *The War and the Prophets*.

²⁸ See, for instance, the postcard “St. Thérèse de l’Enfant Jésus priant pour les soldats.” Lisieux: Carmel, c. 1916.

²⁹ For these devotions, many of them deeply felt, from the ground up, Becker, *War and Faith*, 60–113.

³⁰ M. A., “Le Miracle de Novéant?,” “Supposed Miracle Explained.”

³¹ Huss, *Histoires*, 11, 97–104.

³² For an account of one exchange sequence, Böß, “Blaue Augen.”

³³ Compare using Google N-Grams the incidence of the words “photographe” and “carte postale” or “photograph” and “postcard” over the period 1800 to 2000.

³⁴ Spiritualism and its photographs are the attempt to reunite persons sundered. For the place of the war missing and dead in spiritualism see Faust, *Republic of Suffering*, for the American Civil War, and Winter, *Sites of Memory*, 54–77, for World War I.

³⁵ As Alberti wrote, “Through painting the faces of the dead go on living for a very long time.” *On Painting*, 60. See also Hirsch, *Family Frames*, and Bán and Turai, *Exposed Memories*.

³⁶ Delgado, “Culte i profanació.”

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Three connected essays explore the long history of people's contacts with divine beings in Europe, showing patterns that persist over centuries and adapt to new conditions.

The vision of the Spanish villager Toribia del Val in her garden during a drought in 1931 indicates the vitality of old stories about mysterious strangers who introduce heaven's solutions to collective problems.

In addition to heavenly visitors, statues and paintings have seemed to respond to these problems, by exuding blood, tears and sweat. A second essay looks at the emotional veneration and miracles these animations provoked in Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and then the increasingly skeptical reaction. The cycle repeated in the 1920s and the 1950s in Western Europe in general, exhibited on still and moving film. It continues today.

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